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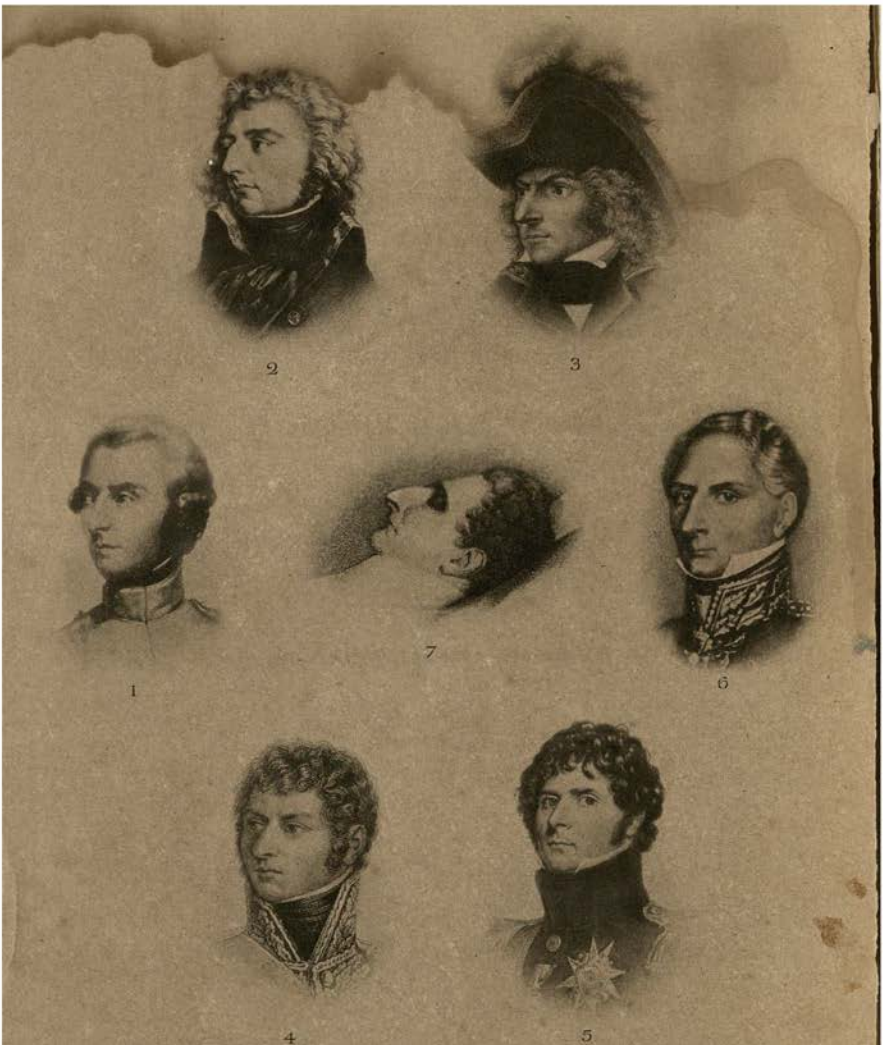

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Jean Baptiste Bernadotte

1763–1844

2. General in the Revolutionary Army 3. Ambassador under the Directory

1. Soldier of King Louis XVI 7. Deathmask 6. King of Sweden & Norway

4. Marshal & Prince of the Empire 5. Crown Prince of Sweden

BERNADOTTE

THE FIRST PHASE
1763–1799

By D. PLUNKET BARTON

WITH PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

THIS book is a study of the character, and of the first phase of the career, of Bernadotte. His character has been described as "une énigme indéchiffrable";[b] and his career has hardly a parallel for adventure and variety.

A lawyer's son, a youth of seventeen years of age, ran away in 1780 from his home at Pau, and enlisted in a marching regiment. He served for more than ten years in the ranks of the army of King Louis XVI.; rose, after the outbreak of the Revolution, to the rank of general; held, under the Directory, the posts of general-in-chief, ambassador, and Minister of War; became a Marshal and a Prince of the First Empire; and, after taking part in nearly all the great events of one of the most eventful epochs in the world's history, was, in 1810, elected Crown Prince of the Kingdom of Sweden. Having added the crown of Norway to that of Sweden, he remained the real ruler of Scandinavia until his death in 1844; and left behind him, in his adopted country, a good name, and a dynasty which has taken root.

More than one of his contemporaries climbed to giddier heights; but none, after a steeper ascent, obtained a surer footing.

To satisfy curiosity about Bernadotte is no easy matter.[c] (1) The materials in the English language are scanty, consisting of some slight memorials, which were published after he became England's ally in the

[a] Letters refer to footnotes; figures, to notes in Appendix.
[b] Alfred Rambaud, *Revue Bleue*, Jan. 1902.
[c] See Bibliographical Note, App. Note (1).

War of Liberation, and a few notices in newspapers, magazines, and books of reference, which are admirable within their limitations.

When we turn to French literature, the difficulty arises less from lack of materials, than from the disturbing circumstance that, in the War of Liberation, Bernadotte fought against the country of his birth; commanded armies which defeated her in battle; entered France in the train of the invading Allies; and contributed powerfully to the fall of the Empire.

When the fabric of Napoleonic splendour had crumbled away, Bernadotte remained firmly seated on his throne. The durability of his success offered such a striking contrast to the oblivion and exile, which were the lot of most of his old comrades in arms, that we cannot feel much surprise, when we find one of them, Philippe de Ségur, declaring that Bernadotte's good fortune seemed to him to afford conclusive evidence of the existence of another world."[a] (2)

France has not forgiven, and perhaps will never quite forgive, Bernadotte. Who can blame her? If the Duke of Wellington had become a foreign sovereign, and, as such, had fought against our nation, we should be better able to appreciate her frame of mind. The resentment, excited in 1813 among his former countrymen, by the presence of the ex-Marshal of the Empire in the enemy's camp, is illustrated by what the French Commandant of Stettin said, when asked for an explanation of a shot from the city walls, which grazed the Swedish Crown Prince. "A simple police affair," said the Commandant. "A deserter was signalled, and the guard fired."

Until the passions of the hour were allayed, there was

[a] Ségur, *Mélanges*, 203; see App. Note (2).

no chance of a fair hearing for Bernadotte's defence—that he was a Swede carrying out the policy of his adopted country. "Excuse banale," said Napoleon at St. Helena, . . . "pour prendre femme on ne renonce point a sa mère."[a] To Dr. O'Meara, however, the ex-Emperor said in a more candid moment, "Bernadotte was ungrateful to me, as I was the author of his greatness; but I cannot say that he betrayed me. He, in a manner, became a Swede, and never promised that which he did not intend to perform."[b]

For many years after the fall of the Empire, Bernadotte was severely satirised by French historians, journalists, and playwrights. The culmination of these attacks took the form, in 1833, of a vaudeville acted at the Palais-Royal, which represented the King of Sweden meeting an old comrade of the Revolution, and exhibiting to him his arm, indelibly tattooed with the words, "Liberty or Death." This play, which was not the only one of the kind, led to a diplomatic protest and to international complications, and served to give currency to a story that Bernadotte was tattooed with Revolutionary mottoes. England intervened, and helped to smooth the relations between France and Sweden, and to terminate a campaign of comedies.[c] (3)

Time has softened the asperity of his former countrymen towards Bernadotte. His name is inscribed upon the Arc de Triomphe; and one of his successors has been officially welcomed by the French Government as a "grandson of France." He is certain to receive a just appreciation, sooner or later, in the country of his birth, where historic truth

[a] Las Cases, iii. 154, 155. [b] O'Meara, ii. 364.
[c] Pingaud, 409–411; and see App. Note (3).

is so much valued and is so scrupulously pursued. M. Schefer in *Bernadotte Roi* has confirmed the opinion prevalent in Sweden, that Bernadotte was a good, and even a great, king. M. Dry in *Soldats Ambassadeurs*[a] has said that if he had died before the end of the Directory (November 1799) his name might now be cited in France with pride and affection. M. Sorel considers that he was spoiled by success, but sums up his early life in three words: "Bernadotte commença noblement."[b]

If it be conceded that he began nobly, that he deserved well of his country until the end of 1799, and that he ended as a good king, there remains an interval coeval with the period of Napoleon's ascendancy; and his admirers have not been slow to draw the inference that the shadows, which, during that interval, dimmed Bernadotte's reputation, were cast by the ascendant figure of his great rival. The history of the relations between Napoleon and Bernadotte makes a tangled web, towards the unravelling of which this book offers a slight contribution.

Bernadotte bore, both in Germany and in Italy, a good reputation as a soldier and an administrator. In the British Empire and in America there is no prejudice against him; but there is, perhaps, some perplexity, and a final judgment has not been pronounced. One reason may be that the evidence is incomplete. Nearly every writer, who has approached the subject, passes lightly over the first phase of his career, and begins to be interested in him in November 1799, when Bonaparte seized power, and became his master. But Bernadotte, in 1799, was in his thirty-seventh year. The best, the most unfettered, the most formative, and not the least

[a] Dry, ii. 465. [b] Sorel, ii. 547.

interesting, stages of his life-journey were behind him.

It has been noticed by independent writers and thinkers that the study of the first phase of Bernadotte's life has been neglected. For example, a competent critic of a book dealing with his later years observed that "the drama has no prologue."[a] Those words suggested the idea of this book to the present writer. The third and fourth and fifth acts of Bernadotte's life-drama developed amazingly, but their interest cannot be fully appreciated, and their significance cannot be fully understood, without the prologue and the earlier scenes, which consist of his experiences as a soldier under the *ancien régime*, as an officer who rose to be a general in the tumultuous wars of the Revolution, and as a military statesman, who played a prominent part, during those four years of "organised anarchy,"[b] when the reins of government in France were handled by the Executive Directory.

To fill a gap by presenting a study of the prologue and the opening scenes of Bernadotte's life-drama, and, to that extent, to contribute to the solution of a complex character-problem, are the aims of this volume.[c]

[a] *Bulletin Critique*, Nov. 1899. [b] Sorel, iv. 470.

[c] Notes (1), (2), and (3) in the Appendix relate to the subject-matter of this Introduction.

PART I

A CADET OF GASCONY

1763–1780

" Les Gascons . . . ils doivent être fous.
Rien de plus dangereux qu'un Gascon raisonnable."
ROSTAND, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, Acte iv., Sc. 3.

PART I

A CADET OF GASCONY

1763–1780

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THE HOUSE AT PAU IN WHICH BERNADOTTE WAS BORN . 4

BERNADOTTE[a]

CHAPTER I

Bernadotte's Béarnais Birthplace and Gascon Raciality

"(Bernadotte) exemplaire de la race si complète, qu'il reproduit sur une seule physiognomie les traits saillants de vingt figures characteristiques, Montluc et Cyrano, Henri IV. et d'Artagnan." —E. M. de Vogüé, *Le Gaulois*, *22nd May* 1901.

In the last week of January 1763, the town of Pau—the capital of the ancient principality of Béarn—was given up to the excitement of a carnival. Among the absentees from the prevailing amusements was the wife of a local lawyer, Madame Henri Bernadotte, who expected in a few weeks to become a mother. A surprise visit of masqueraders, in bizarre costumes, caused a premature confinement,[b] and hurried into existence, on the 26th of January 1763, a boy, who had before him eighty years crowded with action. The carnival scene was a fitting prelude to a life which was to be a medley of incidents and of adventure.(4)

It would not be possible to appreciate, still less to solve, the character-problem, which Bernadotte's career presents for investigation, without bearing in mind his Béarnais extraction and his Gascon raciality. Napoleon described him as "un vrai Gascon." E. M. de Vogüé, in a passage placed at the head of this chapter, has said that Bernadotte "is so complete an example of his race that he reproduces in his single

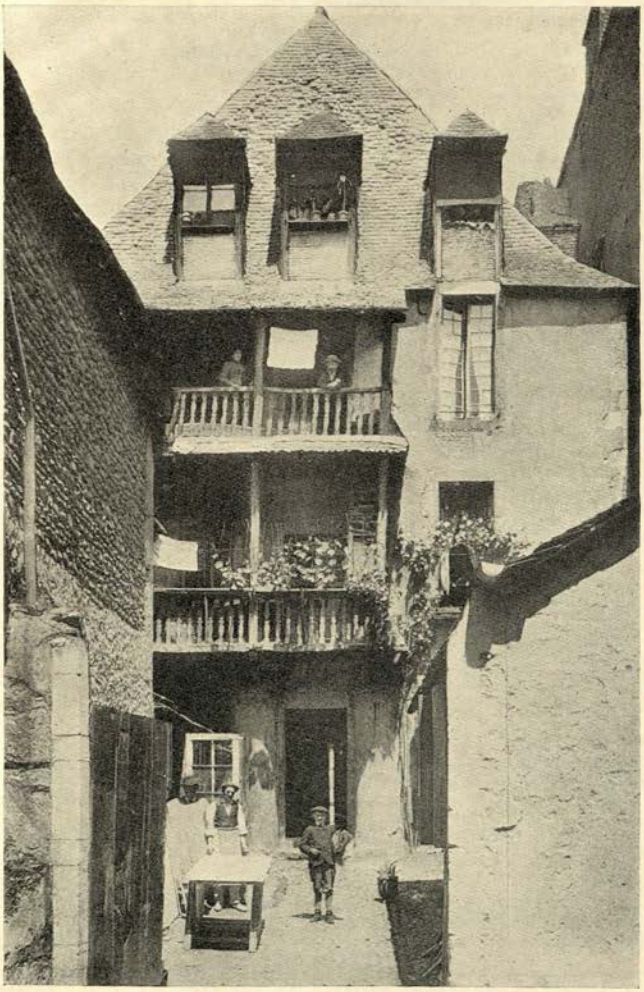
[a] Letters refer to a footnote; figures, to the notes in the Appendix at the end, p. 477.

[b] Lafosse, 31; Sarrans, 1.

personality twenty characteristic figures, Montluc and Cyrano, Henri IV. and d'Artagnan." Léonce Pingaud sums him up as "the most daring, the most extraordinary, the most fortunate of the cadets of Gascony." Albert Sorel calls him "un pur Gascon de Gascogne," and has thought it worth while to point out that he was "put to nurse near the manor of d'Artagnan." The same note has been struck by so many critics and historians, as to support the inference that it is a key-note, and that, in order to understand Bernadotte, it is necessary to know something of the Gascons of Béarn.[a]

Although Béarn lay outside the geographical boundaries of ancient Gascony, its inhabitants were Gascons with certain pronounced traits of their own. They were not without those showy yet attractive qualities, which we are accustomed to associate with Dumas's *Musketeers* and Cyrano's *Cadets*. But, side by side with the foibles, which they shared with other Gascons, they exhibited a strength and dignity that was all their own. They had less about them of that entertaining braggart "le Gascon fou," than of another type, which Rostand has hit off in the phrase, "le Gascon souple et froid, celui qui réussit."(5) Their peculiar traits are said to be traceable to a mixed ancestry, and to a strenuous history. There were Spaniards and Moors as well as French among the forbears of the Béarnais; and their little principality —placed at the foot of the Pyrenees, in the track of border foray, rapine, and invasion—preserved its independence for centuries by the exercise not alone of courage, but also of vigilance, dexterity, and presence of mind. As time went on, it came about that the inhabitants of Béarn were braced and fortified, and their native exuberance of imagination was

[a] Pingaud, 428; Gourgaud, i. 58; Sorel, vii. 218, 455.



THE HOUSE IN PAU WHERE BERNADOTTE WAS BORN, JANUARY 1763.

"A bourgeois house in the town below" (page 5).

To face page 4.

tempered by a touch of sterner purpose and more level judgment. Upon the Gascon stock were grafted qualities of coolness and caution, which they possessed to a degree rarely to be found in Southern climes. The mobile temperament of the race was "pithed with hardihood," and the result was a type fitted, above everything, for success in the battle of a strenuous life.

A mark of a Gascon is a certain blend of weakness and of strength, a strange reconcilement of opposite qualities. We are surprised to find that he may overflow with bluff and bravado, and yet be the bravest of the brave. Among the Béarnais we meet, here and there, with even more astonishing contrasts—irresolution mated with tenacity, excitability with sang-froid, egoism with a chivalrous and compassionate attitude towards the rest of mankind, the power to command with an inability to obey. We are puzzled when we come across an individual who exhibits both impetuosity and self-control; who is adventurous, yet patient in adventures, to the extremity of caution; who is prudent and circumspect, yet fills the stage with a part that is dashing, dramatic, and picturesque.

There have been two historical personages who stand out in bold relief as conspicuous types of the Béarnais race. These were Henri IV., the first of the Bourbon line of French kings, and Jean Baptiste Bernadotte, beside whose cradle we are lingering in this chapter. The homes of their childhood are to be seen at Pau, standing in sight of each other; a stately castle on a hill, and a bourgeois house in the town below.(6) Their careers ran on lines which were strangely alike. Both won thrones, and changed religion (7) to win them. Both did more than win thrones. They kept their thrones and transmitted them to generations of descendants. They differed

widely in mind, in manners, and in methods, but both were Gascons of Béarn ; and, in the case of both of them, their Gascon and Béarnais qualities contributed powerfully to their success.

Henri IV. has been so widely recognised as a type of his race, that the name of " Le Béarnais " has been commonly applied to him in history and in literature. He had, as Lord Acton has said, " not only brilliant qualities as a soldier and a statesman, but also a charm and gladness of character in which he has hardly a rival among crowned heads." He has left behind him a legend full of contrast and of colour—a legend which lingered long and captivated both the many and the great. To the end of his life it had an attraction for Napoleon, who, at The Briars, was overheard humming to himself " Vive Henri IV." The " good King," as he was called, was naturally brave, impetuous and humane ; yet he could, on occasions, be so cold and calculating as to expose him to the imputation of injustice or ingratitude. He combined the utmost frankness of speech and manner with remarkable tact and adroitness in not committing himself. He was constitutionally imperious and autocratic ; yet his personality made such an enduring impression, that he has been handed down to posterity as " le seul roi dont le peuple ait gardé la memoire." He was keenly sensible of the tenacity and adaptability, which he shared with all his race. When his gardener complained that nothing would grow upon a particularly sterile spot in the garden of Fontainbleau, he said with a laugh, " Sow it with Gascons ; they will take root anywhere." He was a master of happy and inspiring phrases. When his accession as King of France involved the incorporation of his tiny principality in his new kingdom, he soothed his countrymen's love of

independence by declaring, " I am not giving Béarn to France ; I am giving France to Béarn." He was born to command ; and nobody knew better how to rouse the drooping spirits of an army. More stimulating than martial music, was the famous order of the day, in which he told his followers that " if they lost their ranks or cornets, they were to rally round his white plume, which they would always find on the road to victory and honour."

The personality of Henri IV. prepares us for that of Bernadotte. Although a princely enchantment attached itself to the young Bourbon, which the bourgeois boy had no chance of inheriting or of acquiring, yet, in a fashion less debonair, but more suited to the Revolutionary time in which he lived, Bernadotte drew from his race a natural charm, a dexterity, a tenacity, and a power of leading men, not less remarkable than those which marked his greater compatriot. Henri IV. stepped into a higher place ; but it may be doubted whether he could have climbed the steep ladder, at the foot of which Bernadotte began.

Bernadotte's life is full of passages, which cannot be understood, unless account is taken of the influence of raciality. It was by the qualities, which he drew from his race, that he won his way ; and it was owing to the defects of those qualities that he often faltered and failed. His biography is the story of a typical Gascon of Béarn, passing through every rank of the army, and many high offices of state ; living and moving in the front of the fighting line of a fighting age ; sometimes pressing forward, sometimes holding back, and ultimately outstaying the swiftest and strongest of his contemporaries.[a]

[a] Notes (4) to (7) in the Appendix relate to the subject-matter of this chapter.

CHAPTER II

BERNADOTTE'S BOYHOOD AND ENLISTMENT 1763–1780

"(Bernadotte) Le plus hardi, le plus extraordinaire, le plus heureux des Cadets de Gascogne."—LÉONCE PINGAUD.

STORIES of boyhood are dull, and unprofitable, unless they serve to indicate predisposition, or to throw a light upon the shadows of coming problems of character. From that point of view let us glance at Bernadotte's boyhood.

Bernadotte's father was a lawyer holding an official position (*procureur au sénéchal*) in the King's Court at Pau.(8) His mother belonged to a family named St. Jean, which had for several generations resided near Pau in the district or parish of Böeiul, and was connected with the nobility of that neighbourhood. His parents were married on 20th February 1754, and he was the fifth and youngest child of the marriage. A brother and a sister died in infancy. At the date of his birth there were living a brother, John, who was nine years old, and a sister, Marie, who was in her fourth year. He was given the same name as his elder brother, with the addition of Baptiste. The naming of two brothers after St. John the Evangelist and St. John the Baptist was not uncommon, and is the explanation of the name of Jean Baptiste being given to the younger Bernadotte. The Bernadottes occupied an agreeable position in their native town, belonging to the "bourgeoisie honorable de la Robe"; and, so long as the father was alive, they lived in comfortable circumstances. One of his comrades in

arms tells us something about his bringing up, which may explain many things which he afterwards said and did—namely, that his father "took care early to inspire his son with noble sentiments."[a]

Old inhabitants of Pau, when in after years Bernadotte became celebrated, recorded their recollections of his boyhood. We are told of a nurse, in whom he always took an affectionate interest; and of youthful combats, of which, to the end of his life, two scars on his forehead remained to remind him. The tradition that he was educated by the Benedictines at the Lycée at Pau is probably well founded. He was intended for the Bar, but he preferred the saddle to the lawyer's stool. The post-house was a favourite resort, and his chief delight was to be allowed to ride the post-horses as postilion. The old postmaster, who in later years delighted in telling the story, added, that on these occasions the future king took pleasure in acting his part so well as to earn and pocket the usual postilion's *pourboire*. It is not to be inferred that young Bernadotte kept low company or indulged in dissipation, but rather that he was a manly, adventurous, combative boy. Two points, which afterwards characterised him, were marked in those days. While he showed good feeling in his social relations, he also displayed a jealous self-concern, which made him quick to imagine a slight, and to resent neglect.

At the age of fourteen he became a law student and apprentice, with the intention of following his father and his elder brother to the profession of the Bar, for success at which, his readiness, presence of mind, and a gift of spontaneous eloquence seem eminently to have fitted him.(9)

In spite, however, of prospects apparently so

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 2.

suitable and favourable, his early years were clouded by unhappiness. Although he grew up to be a man of robust physique, he was a delicate boy, for whom there seemed but little hope of a long or useful life. A circumstance, which is said to have embittered his boyhood, was a preference, which seemed to him to be displayed by his parents, and especially by his mother,[a] for the elder brother, who attracted notice in the social circle, in which the Bernadottes moved, by a caustic wit which amused everyone except those who became its objects. The younger Bernadotte was conspicuous for courtesy and considerateness in his relations with everyone around him; and is said to have felt, and to have expressed, annoyance at his elder brother's habit of making a venerable old friend of the family the butt of his banter and ridicule. When Bernadotte rose to high positions, his deferential manner towards older men was remarked by observers. There may, therefore, be some foundation for the story. But his delicate health and sensitive temperament probably had more to do with his unhappiness than his mother's preference or his brother's witticisms.

These stories of Bernadotte's youth reveal conditions of home life which may have helped to inure him to the hardships of a strenuous career, and to prepare him for those prolonged absences from his country and from his home, which he afterwards experienced in the wars of the Revolution and of the Empire. He will be found bearing these inconveniences with more equanimity than some of his comrades, who, in their conversation and correspondence, made no secret of their surfeit of campaigning, and of their desire for more frequent intervals of peace and of domestic repose.

[a] Lafosse, 32; Sarrans, 2.

We also see in these glimpses of his early days, indications both of that jealousy of disposition, which was one of his defects, and of a chivalrous bearing, which was as natural to him as the Gascon bravado to which it afforded a contrast.

However deeply the boy may have been wounded by comparative neglect in the home circle, no scar remained to mar his relations with his family. His letters written during his early military career, are the letters of an affectionate son and brother. His mother was always the object of his tender solicitude. She lived to see him a Marshal and a Prince of the Empire, and died a few months before he became Crown Prince of Sweden.(10)

Young Bernadotte's prospects were seriously affected by the death of his father, which took place on 31st March 1780.[a] He was in his second year of apprenticeship, and had to look forward to a long period of dependency, before he could hope to attain to the means of self-support. It was under these circumstances that he left his home in September 1780, and sought out a recruiting officer of the Royal-la-Marine Regiment of Infantry, to whom he offered himself for enlistment. He was probably influenced more by unwillingness to be a burden upon his mother and his brother than by military ardour. It was necessary to have the *visé* of the civil authority to the formal document of his enlistment, and, to avoid discovery, he had his papers *viséd* by the Mayor of the neighbouring municipality of Billeris. Attached to his enlistment there is a tradition of a kind to be met with frequently in the lives of famous soldiers. It is said that he exchanged clothes with a veteran of the regiment, who laughingly exclaimed that

[a] Wrangel, 23.

he was sending him forth to become a Marshal of France. (11)

Bernadotte had now plunged, as a runaway recruit, into a vortex, from which he was to extricate himself, thirty years on, as Crown Prince of Sweden. Before we follow the next stage of his journey, let us note, in a sentence or two, what had been the course of public events during his sixteen years of childhood and youth, and how France stood at the date of his enlistment.

At the date of Bernadotte's birth Louis XV. was king ; and, when the boy was eleven years old, Louis XVI. came to the throne. Then came the ministries of Turgot and of Necker, who strove, in their several ways, to save France and the Monarchy by pursuing a policy of social, political, and economic reform. At the date of Bernadotte's enlistment, Necker was on the eve of failure and of retirement ; and France was about to experience eight years of reaction and extravagance, before being engulfed in the pent-up deluge of the Revolution. Bernadotte, during that interval, will be found serving in the ranks of the army of King Louis XVI.[a]

[a] Notes (8) to (11) in the Appendix relate to the subject-matter of this chapter.

PART II

IN THE RANKS

1780–1791

" Cette armée de l'ancien régime, où il n'y avait aucun avenir pour ceux qui n'étaient pas nés."—CAMILLE PELLETAN.

" To climb steep hills requires slow pace at first."—HENRY VIII.

PART II

IN THE RANKS

1780–1791

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CHAPTER III

THE YOUNG RECRUIT—CORSICA—A LONG FURLOUGH —BERNADOTTE'S HOPELESS OUTLOOK UNDER THE ANCIEN RÉGIME

1780–1784

"Dark hair and eyebrows, brown deep-set eyes . . . long pointed nose, etc."—*Official description of young Bernadotte*, 1780.[a]

A young Gascon, "the eye open and intelligent; the nose hooked but finely chiselled."—*Dumas's description of young d'Artagnan.*

"By the law of the case, no man can pretend to be the pitifulest Lieutenant of Militia till he have first verified, to the satisfaction of the Lion King, a nobility of four generations."—CARLYLE (*referring to the aristocratic exclusiveness of the* ancien régime), bk. ii. chap. I.

BERNADOTTE, after his enlistment, joined the depôt of the regiment, at Collioure on the Mediterranean coast. His official description comprises: "Dark hair and eyebrows, brown deep-set eyes, full round face, long pointed nose, small thin-lipped mouth, short rounded chin, narrow forehead with two scars—one in the middle, the other over one eyebrow, caused by a stone."[a] This catalogue contains items which bear a curious resemblance to Dumas's description of young d'Artagnan, and tell the tale of his combative boyhood.

From the depôt he was sent to Toulon, and thence to Bastia, in the island of Corsica, where the Royal-la-Marine Regiment was doing garrison duty.

The Royal-la-Marine ([11]) was a light infantry regiment, which had been raised in 1762 for service in harbours, islands, and colonies. In 1768 Corsica had

[a] Hans Kloeber, 11, quoting Wrangel.

been disposed of to France by Genoa, under an agreement, which Rousseau denounced as an iniquitous transaction. Whether it was iniquitous or not, it was followed by disquiet in the island, which the Royal-la-Marine Regiment had been sent to put down. The regiment is said to have borne a good reputation, and to have been largely recruited in the South of France. There was a touch of Gascony about its motto, which was, "Les coups de mousquet ne nous arrêteront point! Marchons!"

The young recruit appears to have spent about two years in Corsica. The Governor of the island was M. de Marbœuf, known to history as the friend and patron of the Bonaparte family. There is a story of Bernadotte's only meeting with Marbœuf, which would not be unworthy of a place among the adventures of d'Artagnan. The Governor's *chef* came from Pau, and, hearing that a fellow-townsman had arrived in the island, took the first opportunity of inviting his presumably hungry compatriot to the hospitality of the viceregal kitchen. While the two Béarnais were making themselves at home, M. de Marbœuf was heard approaching. To crown young Bernadotte with a white cap, and to introduce him as a kitchen assistant, was the work of a moment. The Governor appears to have accepted the situation; and the young recruit learned that a cook's cap might be as convenient a headpiece in an emergency as a helmet or a crown.[a]

It is an interesting reflection that young Bernadotte was stationed for a year and a half in the same island, sometimes in the same town, as the Bonaparte family, who were destined to be so strangely mixed up with his career. His future brother-in-

[a] Hans Kloeber, 14, quoting Wrangel.

law, Joseph, and his future rival and sovereign, Napoleon, were at school, at Autun and Brienne respectively. Caroline and Jerome were not yet born. But Lucien, Eliza, Louis, and Pauline, who were to be his intimate friends in the dazzling days of the Consulate and of the Empire, were children living in the Bonaparte home at Ajaccio. Corsica was, unawares, the nursery and the resort of future kings and princesses.

After a couple of years of garrison life in Corsica, young Bernadotte fell ill, and returned to Pau on furlough. Before leaving Corsica, he received his first promotion. On 20th May 1782 he became a grenadier. This means that he was placed in the grenadier or "crack" company of the regiment, to which the smartest men were transferred on the recommendation of their captains.(12)

He did not, while on furlough, allow his weapons to rust; for he found time and health to fight a duel with swords, in the Bosquet des Cordeliers near Pau, with one Castaing, afterwards an officer of gendarmerie. We do not know the occasion, or the details, of the encounter, except that Castaing received a severe wound.[a]

During this furlough the young recruit read the biographies of Cortes, and of two famous marshals, Catinat and Fabert[b]—books calculated to stimulate the ambition of a youth of his character and bent. Shortly before this period, the celebrated La Harpe had gained an academic prize for an essay on Catinat's life; and the Marquis de Crequi had published his Memoirs. A Life of Fabert had appeared in 1779. If the life of Cortes was likely to encourage a spirit of adventure, those of Catinat and Fabert were, for a young French soldier, treasure-houses of the "fortitude

[a] Hans Kloeber, 13, quoting Wrangel. [b] Lafosse, 36.

and wisdom" which Lord Morley has said are some of the fruits of well-directed reading.

Catinat's life, on account of its beginning, was calculated to appeal to the imagination of the young Gascon, although he could not have foreseen its remarkable resemblance to all that lay before himself. Catinat, a lawyer's son, renounced his father's profession, enlisted in the ranks of the French army; in due course won his commission as an officer; and, after an honourable career, became Marshal of France. Fabert, who has been described as "le premier Maréchal de France plébeien," was the son of a printer and publisher at Metz, who rose through all the ranks of the French army to the same coveted position. Albert Sorel says of Fabert that in the whole range of military biography there was no one more fit to inspire enthusiastic young soldiers with the traditions of "l'antique honneur français."[a] Both these generals were as remarkable for prudence and good sense as for courage and sang-froid. Catinat was especially distinguished for his chivalrous conduct towards vanquished enemies and conquered territories.

If Bernadotte arose from the study of the biographies of these great captains with any ambition to emulate their achievements, it must have been a galling reflection for a man of his temperament that he could have no hope of realising such aspirations under the exclusive system which prevailed at that time.

At the date of Bernadotte's enlistment, in 1780, he could, under the regulations then in force, have looked forward to reaching the rank of captain. But, when he returned home on furlough, there remained no glimmer of hope of promotion from the ranks for

[a] Sorel, ii. 541, 542.

a lawyer's son, however brave and talented he might be; for in 1781 the edifice of aristocratic exclusiveness was crowned by certain ordinances introduced by the Marquis de Ségur, the grandfather of Count Philippe de Ségur, which laid it down that no man, who did not possess four quarters of nobility, could be qualified to serve his country in any of the superior ranks of the French army. It was of this arbitrary code that Carlyle wrote: "By the law of the case, no man can pretend to be the pitifullest Lieutenant of Militia till he have first verified, to the satisfaction of the Lion King, a nobility of four generations."[a]

Napoleon at St. Helena referred to the upholders of this system as having been a chief cause of the Revolution, and remarked that most of the generals, of whose deeds France was so proud, had sprung from that very class of plebeians which was so much despised under the *ancien régime*.[b]

This is one of the governing facts of Bernadotte's life. Nothing else contributed so directly to shape his attitude of mind towards public affairs. Nothing else offers an adequate explanation of some of the most interesting passages of his career. It was not by reading Montesquieu, Voltaire or Rousseau that men like Bernadotte became enthusiastic adherents of the cause of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, but by experiencing the humiliating injustices which were illustrated by the decrees of the Marquis de Ségur. These glaring inequalities drove Masséna, Oudinot, and other brave and competent soldiers out of the ranks of the King's army, leaving behind them many who were discouraged and resentful. It should always be remembered that, shortly after his enlistment, the door of entry to the rank of officer was

[a] Carlyle, 311. [b] O'Meara, i. 219.

slammed in Bernadotte's face, and that, until it was opened to him by the Revolution,(11) he spent the most impressionable decade of his life under the ban, which the military law cast upon every soldier, whatever his merits might be, who could not point to four quarters of nobility. It was in reference to these ordinances, that the historian, Henri Martin, has said that "citizens and sergeants remembered the insult thus thrown at the middle class, when they joined hands under the walls of the Bastille." The memory of his hopeless outlook under the *ancien régime* supplies the key to Bernadotte's political attitude in later years, when he drifted into an alliance with the Jacobins,[a] rather than risk a return to the odious contrasts and discrepancies, which were associated with his recollection of the Monarchy.[b]

[a] Chapter LXV., 401 *et seq.*

[b] Note (12) in the Appendix relates to the subject-matter of this chapter.

CHAPTER IV

CORPORAL — SERGEANT — SERGEANT-MAJOR — NON-COMMISSIONED ADJUTANT — IN GARRISON AT GRENOBLE AND MARSEILLES

JANUARY 1785—OCTOBER 1788

"If I become Sergeant-Major, as they lead me to hope, I shall receive at least thirty-two sols (halfpence) a day."—*Bernadotte's letter to his brother, March* 1786.

THE Regiment Royal-la-Marine left Corsica early in 1784, disembarked at Toulon and proceeded to Grenoble by way of Briançon.[a]

Grenoble, the capital of the old province of Dauphiny, was a fortified town, situate near the frontiers of Switzerland and Savoy, within sight of the snow-clad summits of the Dauphiny Alps. It was a place, which treasured a traditional pride in its history and in its local institutions; and was easily roused by an appeal to popular passions. In 1784, when the Regiment Royal-la-Marine formed part of its garrison, it was enjoying the calm which preceded the revolutionary storm.

Books of more or less authority have stated that Bernadotte, in these early days, fought in America under Lafayette and Rochambeau; while it has been still more frequently recorded that he served in India, and distinguished himself at the siege of Cuddalore. The latter story originated in a characteristic gasconade,(13) in which, when a marshal, he was tempted to indulge during his administration in North Germany. There seems to be no foundation for any

[a] Hans Kloeber, 12.

of these statements. He never served in America or in India.

The French army had been reduced by about a half, and promotion was slow. Bernadotte obtained two steps in the year of his return to duty. On 15th June 1785 he became a corporal. On 31st August 1785 he became a sergeant. A sergeant's pay was ten or eleven sous, or about sixpence a day. It had taken him five years to reach that rank.

It was at Grenoble that Bernadotte had a narrow escape of being buried alive.[a] In the course of a severe illness he fell into unconsciousness so complete that he was officially declared by the medical officer (who happened to be Elisée, afterwards physician to Louis XVIII.) to be dead, and ordered to be removed to the Morgue. A young doctor named Millars, whether for the purpose of experiment or from a doubt as to his lifelessness, obtained leave to have him removed to his quarters, where he came to himself. Bernadotte made enemies in the course of his career, who would not have been disposed to regard Doctor Millars as a public benefactor.

The young sergeant's duties, anxieties, and hopes are expressed in the following letter to his brother. One characteristic phrase defies translation :—

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I have received your letter. . . . They have made me several offers, which they have promised to take the first opportunity of effectuating. Following your advice, 'Je me jetterai à corps perdu sur les promesses qu'on ne cesse de faire.' I look forward to some more settled position, because I must confess that my present condition is subject to many vicissitudes. In truth one enjoys but few moments to compensate one for the anxieties which the service exacts. Eight days ago I returned from Avignon, where I was sent on duty, in pursuit

[a] Sarrans, 3, 4.

of a young man of rank who had deserted from the regiment. I arrested him alone in the presence of nine soldiers of the Toulon Marines who were conducting him to their corps. I received the praise of the major of my regiment, and of all the officers. They have held out hopes that I shall receive a gratuity on the occasion of the Review. I have certainly earned it well. In three months I have effected three arrests. In two cases the fugitives were within half an hour of Chambéry (*i.e.* the frontier). . . . If I become Sergeant-Major, as they lead me to hope, I shall receive at least thirty-two sols (halfpence) a day. . . . I am for life your devoted brother

" BERNADOTTE,
" Sergeant of Light Infantry.

" GRENOBLE, *9th March* 1786.

" Give my respects to my dear mother, and my love to my sister."[a]

Bernadotte had to wait nearly two years before he attained the coveted rank of sergeant-major with its princely pay. In the meantime, he realised his wish to have a more settled post than that of sergeant. On 21st June 1786 he was appointed " fourrier écrivant," or quarter-master. After serving as quarter-master for nearly two years, he was appointed sergeant-major on 11th May 1788.

Bernadotte now began to come into touch with the general unrest, which marked the years immediately preceding the outbreak of the Revolution. Grenoble shared the prevailing inquietude, and was the scene of several local outbreaks, in the checking or quelling of which his regiment had to take a part.

One of these *émeutes* created a tremendous stir at the time, and still holds a place as an historic episode in the annals of Dauphiny. A struggle between the royal authority and the local *parlement*

[a] Wrangel, 53 n.

led to a riot (7th and 8th June 1788), in the course of which the troops of the garrison of Grenoble came into collision with the people, and were pelted with tiles from the roofs of the houses. On this account the occasion is commemorated under the name of *La Journée des Tuiles* (The Day of the Tiles), and has a literature and bibliography of its own. Bernadotte's name has been linked by tradition with one of the events of the day. An adjutant or ensign of the Royal-la-Marine Regiment with a patrol of four men was attacked and gave an order to fire, resulting in loss of life. The adjutant or ensign of the regiment, who gave the order to fire, was imprisoned. A legend sprang up that Bernadotte was the adjutant in question, or the firer of the shot. Michelet, in his *History of France*, paints a dramatic word-picture of the future king exciting the indignation of the mob by his "hooked nose and vulture-like visage," and receiving a box on the ear from a woman in the crowd. But this interesting passage, which has been followed by several subsequent writers, is dismissed by others as a flight of the popular historian's imagination. It has been pointed out that Bernadotte did not become adjutant until two years afterwards, and that a sergeant-major is not likely to have been one of a small patrol; and it has been suggested that the story attached itself to Bernadotte, after he became king. The question of the authenticity of this tradition cannot be said to be settled.[14]

One result of the "Day of the Tiles" was to lead to a violent popular outcry against the governor of the city[15] and against the Regiment Royal-la-Marine, and to a demand for its removal. The regiment appears to have departed from Grenoble in the following October for Vienne, and to have left the

latter place in April 1789, arriving at Avignon the 13th May 1789. Thence the first battalion, to which Bernadotte belonged, proceeded to Marseilles, arriving there on or before 6th September 1789.(16)

It may have been on the arrival of the regiment at Marseilles in September 1789[a] that the incident occurred, which, to the end of her life, Queen Desirée of Sweden was fond of relating. She was the daughter of M. François Clary, a rich and prominent merchant of Irish descent, resident in Marseilles. Her chamberlain[b] has related the story in her own words: "One day a soldier presented himself with a requisition billeting him in our house at Marseilles. My father, who had no wish to be disturbed by the noise which soldiers usually make, politely sent him back with a letter to his colonel, requesting that an officer might be billeted on us instead of a soldier. The soldier who was sent back in this way was Bernadotte, who was afterwards to marry me and become a king." The date of this incident has not been very clearly identified. It is sometimes stated to have occurred in 1784, when the regiment returned from Corsica. The date, however, is of less importance than the remarkable coincidence of Bernadotte being billeted upon, and rejected by, the fastidious householder whose daughter he was destined to make a queen. The picture of the little Desirée seeing her future lord and king turned away as "an undesirable," is one of the many strange tableaux in the drama of Bernadotte's life.

Bernadotte was, on account of his handsome appearance, known as "Sergeant Belle-jambe." But, this nickname was not a badge of coxcombry or of inefficiency; for, on 7th February 1790, he was

[a] Hans Kloeber, 18. [b] *Desirée*, par Hochschild, 2.

appointed to the post of adjutant, which was the highest post to which a non-commissioned officer could attain, and was a position of importance, supplying the link between the officers and the lower ranks. On the occasion of an inspection of the garrison, the colonel of the Royal-la-Marine, according to custom, presented the adjutant to the inspecting general, the Marquis de Boutilliers, who, turning to the colonel, remarked, "If your adjutant is as smart as he looks, he is a credit to the regiment." "I can assure you," replied the colonel, "that his smart appearance is the least of his merits." Other officers who were standing by confirmed this opinion.[a]

Bernadotte, in spite of his non-commissioned rank, appears to have been recognised, and to have been treated as a gentleman, and to have enjoyed, to an unusual degree, the friendship of the officers. In his later career there is hardly any reference to his former fellow-soldiers; but there are many references to Royalist officers, to whom on several occasions he was in a position to render service. He proved a "friend in need" to M. de Vitrolles, to whom as a sergeant he had taught fencing, when the fencing-master had become a general and his aristocratic pupil an outlaw.[b] He took pleasure in belying the judgment of one of his captains, who had called the young Gascon "une mauvaise tête." Bernadotte, twenty years afterwards, when Marshal and Governor of Anspach, met the old captain and invited him to dinner. After dinner he reminded his former commander of their quarrel, and said, "Vous voyez que malgré ma mauvaise tête, je n'ai pas trop mal fait mon chemin." On another occasion we shall find Bernadotte, when Ambassador of France to the Austrian Court,

[a] Lafosse, 39. [b] Talleyrand, *Mémoires*, i. 138 (transl.), i. 105.

displaying respect and deference towards a former colonel of his regiment, an *émigré* and exile at Vienna.[a] When King of Sweden, he found an opportunity of conferring a Swedish decoration upon Morard d'Arces, one of his old officers.[b]

We find references to four colonels, or lieutenant-colonels, under whom Bernadotte served in the Royal-la-Marine—the Comte de Lons, the Marquis de Béthisy, the Marquis d'Ambert, and the Comte de Boulard. With the Marquis d'Ambert he was on terms of cordial friendship, and he twice ran serious risks to save Colonel d'Ambert's life. Barras, who was an unbeliever in disinterested friendship, suggests that Madame la Marquise d'Ambert took an interest in the handsome adjutant. But, a gossipy tale of that kind, depending solely on Barras' authority, does not deserve to have much weight attached to it.

The first occasion upon which Bernadotte exerted himself to rescue his colonel will be related in the next chapter.[c]

[a] Chapter L. *infra*. [b] Pingaud, 413.

[c] Notes ([13]) to ([16]) in the Appendix relate to the subject-matter of this chapter.

CHAPTER V

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION—BERNADOTTE'S EXPERIENCES AT MARSEILLES AND LAMBESC

FEBRUARY 1790–APRIL 1792

"The white cockade remains there until my military chiefs command me to change it."—*Bernadotte's reply to a revolutionary crowd who call on him to remove the Royal emblem.*

"Monsieur l'adjutant vous irez loin."—*Barbaroux to Bernadotte, 21st March 1790.*

THE interval between Bernadotte's departure from Grenoble (October 1788) and his promotion, at Marseilles, to the rank of non-commissioned adjutant (February 1790), covered the momentous period, in which were enacted at Versailles and in Paris the opening scenes of the French Revolution.

Bernadotte was far away from the metropolitan theatre in which this stupendous political drama was being unfolded. But, as the first non-commissioned officer of a royal regiment, in a great provincial city, he found himself face to face with the visible signs of the breaking-up of the old order of things and of the springing up of the new.

The young adjutant was placed in a situation which created a conflict between his political inclinations and his duty. He was a soldier of the King; but he could not fail to be attracted by the prospect, offered by the Revolution to a man of his birth and station, of that equality of opportunities, from the lack of which he and his class were the most undeserving sufferers. The situation was a delicate one; but his Gascon temperament carried him through the

troubles of the time, without either hurt or dishonour.

Of all the provincial cities, none were more deeply moved by the new ideas than Marseilles. The citizens, whom the adjutant of the Royal-la-Marine Regiment met and elbowed every day in the streets, were of the same grim fire and fibre as their townsmen, who, a little more than two years afterwards, marched to Paris under Barbaroux to the music of Rouget de Lisle's celebrated hymn.

One of the symptoms of public ferment was the display, almost everywhere and by almost everybody, of the popular badge of the new order of things, the national tricolored cockade. As the young adjutant, with some comrades, was walking along a crowded street, an excited gang of citizens presented him with a tricolor ribbon. He took it and fastened it to the hilt of his sword. They were not satisfied, and pointed to his hat, on which was the white cockade. Bernadotte exclaimed, "No; the white cockade remains there until my military chiefs command me to change it. A soldier cannot follow his feelings as you do. He must obey and observe discipline; otherwise there is no guarantee for your defence or for that of the nation." His listeners, attracted by the force and the readiness of the reply, applauded; and the adjutant and his companions were allowed to pass on.[a] This story is characteristic of the peculiar power, which Bernadotte possessed, of presenting, on the spur of the moment, the point of view of Order and Obedience in terms so direct and so happy, as to catch the fancy and to win the assent of an undisciplined crowd.

Another incident was illustrative of the discordant

[a] Lafosse, 40.

relations which sprang up in 1790 between the old army and the new. After the fall of the Bastille, the municipality of Paris had instituted a civic force under the name of the National Guards; and the other municipalities of France had followed the example. A huge municipal corps of National Guardsmen paraded and patrolled Marseilles, sharing the military duties of the place with the regular garrison, which comprised a few thousand royal troops. So wide was the divergence between the respective traditions and ideals of these two armies of occupation, as to render impossible any effective co-operation. There might have been a chance of unison among the rank and file. But an irreconcilable incompatibility of method and of temper sprang up between the new municipal militia and the aristocratic officers of the King's army, who, like so many of their caste, had forgotten nothing and had learnt nothing.

These jarring elements were in hourly danger of breaking out in open quarrel; and the hour struck when Colonel d'Ambert returned suddenly, on the 20th March 1790, from a visit to Avignon, on account of the disturbed condition of Marseilles. He arrived at one of the city gates, known as the gate of Aix, at which there were two sentry-posts, one composed of regular troops, and the other of National Guards. Different versions of what ensued have been given. The following is the account, which was adopted by the report of a committee of the National Assembly.[a]

When the colonel arrived at the city gate, the sentry stopped his carriage, and asked for the names of the occupants. "That is no business of yours," was

[a] The *Tiers Etat*, in June 1789, declared itself the National Assembly, which, on account of its powers, was also known as the Constituent Assembly.

the reply. "I am a soldier of the National Guards," said the sentry, "and am executing my instructions." "Who are the National Guards? I don't know them!" exclaimed the colonel, and ordered his coachman to drive on. After some further parley, a captain came forward, and said that the stranger should give his name instead of getting into a rage. "Who are you who ask my name?" said the colonel. "I am a captain of the National Guards," was the reply. "You have no uniform," said d'Ambert. "I don't know you in that grey costume and those feathers." He then appealed to the regular guard, who identified him as the colonel of the Royal-la-Marine Regiment. The colonel is said to have proceeded to call the National Guards *canaille*; to have challenged them to combat in the plain of St. Michael, near Marseilles; and to have declared that, with one company of his troops, he would wipe out their whole corps, adding that they might take that message to the mayor and to the municipality.[a] The officers of the National Guards at once reported their version of the matter to the civic authorities, who resolved to make it the ground for a petition to the Government for the removal of the regular troops from the city.

It is just to Colonel d'Ambert to say that he is elsewhere represented as having acted, throughout the entire transaction, with dignity and courtesy.[b] A different story was, however, told and believed; and the news spread like wildfire, that the colonel of the Royal-la-Marine had insulted the National Guards, and had threatened to lead the regular troops against the citizens. Nothing could have been more calculated to inflame the public mind. Popular feeling was rapidly roused against the regular troops, and in

[a] *Moniteur*, 29th March 1790. [b] Lafosse, 41.

particular against the Regiment Royal-la-Marine and its colonel.

On the following morning, 21st March, Bernadotte volunteered to go, at the head of other non-commissioned officers of the regiment, to the City Hall, to make peace, on behalf of the colonel and of the regiment, with the municipality.

It is not easy to disentangle the details of the turbulent scene which ensued. It would appear that Bernadotte addressed the city fathers and the populace, and had succeeded in bringing about a fraternisation with the National Guards, when the colonel himself was heard approaching the City Hall, surrounded by a crowd, who were threatening to hang him to the nearest lamp-post.

Bernadotte went to the colonel's assistance and extricated him from his assailants. Then, having collected his comrades, he addressed the crowd, and fastened their attention by his striking appearance and ringing voice. "Citizens of Marseilles," he said, "surely you do not wish to stain the honour of your city by an assassination. If the colonel has done wrong, let the law, of which your magistrates are the guardians, judge him. If, however, you attempt any illegal violence against him, it shall be over the dead bodies of myself and my comrades."[a] This speech won its cause. The colonel was rescued, and conveyed into the City Hall, where the municipal authorities decided to submit to the Government the question of his custody and mode of trial, and, in the meantime, to make themselves responsible for his safety.

The decision of the municipal authorities was communicated to the crowd by a remarkable man,

[a] Lafosse, 43.

who happened to be one of the city officials. This was Barbaroux, whom Carlyle has described as the "young Spartan ripe in energy, not ripe in wisdom, over whose black doom there shall float nevertheless a certain ruddy fervour, streaks of bright Southern tint not wholly swallowed of death."[a] Later on, he became noted as one of the orators of the ill-fated Girondist party.

Barbaroux came forward, and, grasping Bernadotte's hand, said, "Monsieur l'Adjutant, you will go far; and I predict that, if circumstances are only favourable, you will have a glorious future." Another witness has recorded his impressions of the scene. Nearly thirty years afterwards, when Bernadotte was King of Sweden, a citizen of Marseilles, M. Ricard d'Allaux, recalled the incident, at which he had been present, and claimed to have, no less than Barbaroux, predicted great things for the young adjutant.[b]

Although the colonel had escaped from the mob, his danger was by no means past. He was detained in the City Hall, pending the reference of his case to the National Assembly; and he ran a serious risk of being misrepresented to, and sacrificed by, the popular Government of the day. The case might go against him by default, and without his being heard. In view of this fresh source of danger, Bernadotte and his comrades took a somewhat daring course. They resolved to address the National Assembly on their colonel's behalf. But how were a group of non-commissioned officers in Marseilles to reach the ears of an Assembly sitting far away in Paris, or to catch the eye of its President? Gascon resourcefulness was equal to the occasion. It had been announced that

[a] Carlyle, 433. [b] Lafosse, 44, 45.

the municipality of Marseilles had decided to transmit, by special courier, a message to the National Assembly, asking for directions as to the tribunal, before which Colonel d'Ambert should be brought, and pressing for the removal of the regular troops from Marseilles. The non-commissioned officers succeeded in sending by the same special courier a memorial in defence of the colonel, with a covering letter to the President of the National Assembly, written by Bernadotte and signed by them all.

The scene now changes to Paris, where the question of the *affaire d'Ambert* was brought before the National Assembly at their morning sitting on Saturday, 27th March, by M. de Castallanet, one of the deputies of Marseilles, and was referred by the Assembly to a committee, which was directed to report on it to the evening sitting. A report of the morning debate on the affair is to be found in the journals of the day.[a] M. de Castallanet, in describing the incident, referred to the visit of the non-commissioned officers to the City Hall, and to the applause with which their declaration, of which Bernadotte had been the spokesman, was received. It appears, from the report of the debate in the *Moniteur*, that the President of the National Assembly announced that he had received a memorial by the same courier, representing that the colonel had come to the City Hall for the purpose of making reparation for what had occurred.

The covering letter of the memorial is interesting, for it is the first of the many documents of State which issued from Bernadotte's resourceful mind and ready pen. It runs as follows :—

[a] e.g. *Moniteur*, 28th March 1790.

" The non-commissioned officers of the Regiment Royal-la-Marine have the honour to address to you an accurate account of the unhappy occurrence which has befallen their colonel on the occasion of his arrival in the city. It contains the exact truth as regards those events, and as regards his detention in the City Hall, where he had gone in order to support the declaration which his non-commissioned officers had just made to make clear to the people their ardent wishes for union and peace. . . . We beg of you, M. le President, and we dare to hope from your kindness and goodness, that you will suspend all judgment until the reports have reached you from both sides. We have the honour to be, M. le President, your very humble and obedient servants, the non-commissioned officers of the Regiment Royal-la-Marine.—BERNADOTTE, Adjutant." Then follow the other signatures, twelve in all.[a]

The discussion of the d'Ambert affair was resumed at the evening sitting of the Assembly, when the report of the Committee was presented. A short debate ensued,[b] which was rendered interesting by the intervention of the celebrated Mirabeau, who supported the Committee's recommendation that Colonel d'Ambert should be handed over to the local tribunal. The Assembly, however, rejected this advice, and adopted an amendment which was moved by the Marseilles deputy, leaving it to the King to decide what tribunal should try the colonel.

In this way Colonel d'Ambert's life was saved from the grip of the Revolution, which he so feebly understood. But it was only a reprieve. He was executed, eight years afterwards, as a returned *émigré*; and the influence of Bernadotte, then a general

[a] Wrangel, 69, 70. [b] *Moniteur*, 29th March, 1790.

and ex-ambassador, was again—but on that occasion not successfully—exerted to save him.[a]

The Regiment Royal-la-Marine left Marseilles on 21st April 1790, a few weeks after the d'Ambert trouble; and the first battalion proceeded to Lambesc, where a new phase of the revolution exhibited itself. At Marseilles the evil had been traceable to the quarrels, which sprang up between the old army and the new. At Lambesc the fever of revolt began to attack the non-commissioned officers and men of the old army. The Royal-la-Marine Regiment caught the spreading infection,[b] and initiated a regimental revolution in accordance with what they understood to be the spirit of the age.

In the church at Lambesc, which had been converted into a barrack, the rank and file of the regiment proposed to elect the senior non-commissioned officer, Adjutant Bernadotte, to be colonel of the regiment. Bernadotte suited his action to the place. He mounted the pulpit, and having thanked his fellow-soldiers for the expression of their confidence, persuaded them to return to the path of discipline and obedience. This was one of the incidents of his early career which, when King of Sweden, he was fond of recalling.

From Lambesc the regiment was in June transferred to the island of Oléron, on the western coast; from Oléron to Rochefort on the mainland; and afterwards to the adjacent island of Ré, where it remained until the spring of 1792. One of the few memorials of this period of Bernadotte's life is his signature to the registration of a marriage which took place, on 15th November 1791, between the bandmaster and the

[a] Chapter LIII. *infra.*

[b] *Moniteur*, 12th and 14th June, 11th July 1790.

vivandière of the Royal-la-Marine Regiment, from which it appears that this presumably well-matched pair were honoured by the presence at their wedding of His future Majesty of Sweden.

The Revolution had, during this period of nearly two years, forged ahead of all the plans and expectations of its creators. The National Assembly had come to an end, after demolishing the whole structure of French society and government. The Legislative Assembly had taken its place with a majority which was really, if not outspokenly, Republican. The King had tried to escape, and had been brought back to his palace-prison. Thenceforward it mattered little whether he vetoed or accepted the violent measures of the Assembly. *Quacunque via,* he was journeying towards the scaffold. Bernadotte, during this fateful period, was doing regimental duty on the western coast. Meanwhile a new cloud appeared on the national horizon. Hitherto France had been only harassed by internal troubles; now she was menaced by the calamity of a war, which was to open the door to his marvellous career.

CHAPTER VI

After Eleven Years in the Ranks, Bernadotte becomes Lieutenant in the 36th Regiment

November 1791–April 1792

"I have only time to tell you that I have been appointed Lieutenant in the 36th Regiment. . . . I have the happiness to owe my promotion to my conduct and to my country."—*Extract from Bernadotte's letter to his brother, dated 3rd April* 1792.

During the winter of 1791–1792 Bernadotte remained in the Isle de Ré as non-commissioned adjutant. One of the military reforms of this revolutionary era was to abolish the old regimental names; and under the new regulations the Royal-la-Marine Regiment became the 60th Regiment of Infantry. Another result of the Revolution was to open the door of promotion to efficient non-commissioned officers. Under the new military law, a certain proportion of the lieutenants and sub-lieutenants were elected by the votes of the regimental officers, while the rest were appointed directly by the Minister of War.

Early in 1792 a sub-lieutenancy had to be filled up by the votes of the officers of the corps. Bernadotte, being the principal non-commissioned officer of the regiment, had every reason to expect that he would be elected; but he failed to obtain a majority of the votes. He did not remain silent or quiescent under this rebuff, as is shown by the following letter written to his brother on 23rd February 1792:—

"You certainly have reason to complain, my dear brother, of my neglect to answer your letter,

which would be indeed inexcusable if I had not only too many reasons to offer for my justification. (He then speaks of a severe attack of rheumatism which confines him to bed.) . . . There has been an election to a sub-lieutenancy for which I failed to obtain a majority of votes. A sergeant-major, a gentleman whom I myself promoted to the rank, obtained more votes than I did. Nevertheless, all the officers expressed to me their regret at having had to yield to certain considerations, and assured me that, in the promotion which must soon take place, I shall have the first choice of employment. I have not been deluded by these empty promises, and I have not allowed them to ignore the injustice which they have done me. I have put forward the good order and discipline of the 1st battalion, which is the result of my personal work. Without any bitterness I reproached some of these gentlemen with their ingratitude. The dangers and risks which I have run on their account were not forgotten. The commanding officer and senior captains united in assuring me that the result was contrary to their votes. They positively declared that I shall be included in the promotions which will be made at an early date. Adieu, my dear brother. . . . To cease to love you, I must cease to live.

" J. B. BERNADOTTE.

" ST. MARTIN, ISLAND OF RÉ,
" *23rd February* 1792." [a]

A few weeks after this disappointment, another vacancy occurred among the sub-lieutenants, to which the officers unanimously nominated Bernadotte; and the colonel was about to appoint him adjutant-major of the regiment, when a commission came from another quarter. On 26th March the Minister for War appointed Bernadotte to a lieutenancy in the 36th Regiment, previously the Regiment of Anjou. On 31st March the colonel wrote to Bernadotte

[a] Wrangel, 74, 75.

informing him of his appointment, which was antedated to 9th November 1791, and adding—

"I regret, sir, that this event compels you to leave the 60th Regiment, where your zeal for the good of the service has been turned to the advantage of the State, and has won for you the esteem of the whole corps. They had unanimously chosen you for a sub-lieutenancy, and I had hoped to immediately appoint you adjutant-major. Console yourself, sir, with the confident assurance that, when your new chiefs have time to know your merits, they will undoubtedly choose you for that position.

"Colonel of the 60th Regiment,

"BOULARD."

On 3rd April Bernadotte wrote to his brother:—

"I have only time to inform you that I have been appointed lieutenant in the 36th Regiment, formerly known as the Regiment of Anjou, which is quartered at St. Servan. I enclose a copy of the letter which I have just received from our Colonel. It will let you know that, in spite of the Minister's good intentions towards me, I suffer a serious loss in having to leave the 60th Regiment, in which I have learnt the first elements of the military profession, and had hoped to spend an agreeable career awaiting my promotion to the rank of captain. Nevertheless, I render a willing obedience to the order which I have received; and I have the happiness to owe my promotion to my conduct and to my country. . . . Believe me, I beg of you, for life your dear brother and friend,

"JEAN BERNADOTTE, Adjutant.

"ST. MARTIN, ISLAND DE RÉ,
"*3rd April* 1792."[a]

The shut door which had barred Bernadotte's career was open at last. He had been nearly eleven years in the ranks, and had passed through every

[a] Wrangel, 77.

BERNADOTTE, SOLDIER OF KING LOUIS XVI.

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non-commissioned grade. Few of the distinguished soldiers of his day won their epaulettes after a longer apprenticeship. Only two of Napoleon's marshals could make that claim. Marshal Lefèbvre served for nearly sixteen years in the ranks of the Gardes Françaises. It is on that account that he is sometimes alluded to as "le vieux Garde Français." Marshal Masséna spent about fourteen years as a soldier or non-commissioned officer in the Royal Italian Regiment. Six other marshals of the Empire began as "rankers" in the royal army—namely, Murat, Victor, Jourdan, Oudinot, Soult, and Ney; but their periods of service, as such, were shorter than Bernadotte's.

When Bernadotte became King of Sweden, he delighted in recalling his experiences in the ranks; and many an anecdote, told by him in his palace at Stockholm, was introduced with the words, "Lorsque j'étais sergent," or "A cette époque je venais d'être nommé officier." Yet it was the least adventurous stage of his life. It had taken him more than ten years to win a commission. In less than twenty years he was to find himself on the steps of a throne.

PART III

THE ARMY OF THE REVOLUTION

1792–1794

"La Republique, c'était la guerre nationale, et l'avancement ouvert à tous."—ALBERT SOREL.

"The bright side of the Revolutionary army was the passionate patriotism of the volunteers. Its dark side was their mutinous indiscipline."—*Infra*, p. 47.

PART III

THE ARMY OF THE REVOLUTION

1792–1794

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CHAPTER VII

The Outbreak of the Wars of the Revolution—Lieutenant Bernadotte's Comments on the Assassination of General Dillon

APRIL–MAY 1792

"The limits of France are defined by Nature. We shall reach them at four points—the ocean, the banks of the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees."—DANTON.

"Nature has fixed the Rhine as a frontier of France."—*Catchword of the French Revolution.*

"My honour and my duty shall always be my guiding motives . . . believe me I shall always follow the call of my conscience."—*Extract from Bernadotte's letter to his brother, 6th May* 1792.

BERNADOTTE, having obtained his commission as lieutenant in the 36th Regiment, bade farewell to the officers and men of the 60th, and arrived at St. Servan in Brittany, where his new regiment was stationed, at the end of April or beginning of May.

This change in the young Gascon's rank and regiment coincided with the declaration, on 20th April 1792, of the war, which, in one shape or another, continued almost unbrokenly, until the fall of Napoleon. We shall better understand both his career, and the military theatre, in which he played his part, if we remind ourselves of the causes of the first outbreak of hostilities and of their long continuance. The immediate *casus belli* was, as often happens, comparatively trivial; but there were wider and deeper differences of aim and of ideals between France and Europe, which explain the fact that the war-dogs, which were unleashed in April 1792, were not re-kennelled until after the lapse of twenty-three years.

The immediate pretexts of quarrel were two-fold, namely, the abolition by the French Government of certain feudal privileges enjoyed in Alsace and Lorraine by a group of German princelings, and the hospitality and protection extended in Germany to French *émigrés*. But, behind these transient pretexts was a real and enduring cause of war—namely, the aggressive foreign policy which became an outstanding feature of the French Revolution.

The Assembly, in the early stages of the Revolution, had renounced all idea of conquest, and had proclaimed an era of universal peace and brotherhood. But these delusive dreams were soon dispelled by the force of circumstances and by the elation of national sentiment. The leaders of opinion became interested in fanning the flame of war; and it was fanned by the popular phrases, of which the revolutionary lexicon contained an inexhaustible store.

Among the favourite catchwords of the time, few, if any, had more influence upon the external relations of France than the phrase "Natural Boundaries." It embodied the doctrine that France should be bounded by seas, mountains, and rivers. It voiced a national aspiration; summed up an attractive foreign policy, which could be understood by every man in the street and by every soldier in the ranks; and turned a war of conquest into a crusade. Danton raised a battle-cry, which appealed less to territorial greed, than to patriotic faith and conviction, when he declared: "The limits of France are defined by Nature. We shall reach them at four points—the ocean, the banks of the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees."[a]

Of the four points, which Danton declared to be

[a] Sorel, ii. 279.

natural boundaries of France, the Rhine was the one for which Bernadotte was now called upon to fight. For the next four years we shall find him engaged in a succession of wars, some offensive and some defensive, sometimes in the Netherlands and sometimes in Germany, but all waged for the purpose of winning and holding the Rhine as a boundary of France.

Bernadotte had hardly reported himself at St. Servan, when the news arrived of a serious disaster on the northern frontier. The French had invaded the Austrian Netherlands, and had been repulsed, on 29th April, at Mons and at Lille. At the latter place the troops threw the blame upon their commander, General Theobald Dillon, one of two gallant brothers of Irish descent, and accused him of treason. The charge was utterly unfounded ; but the general was unable to cope with the emergency. Before order could be restored or justice could be vindicated, the soldiers and the mob of Lille inflicted upon him what they were pleased to call the " punishment " of death, and sent him summarily to his last account.[a]

The tragical death of General Dillon is referred to in a letter which the young lieutenant wrote to his brother on the 6th of May. The letter emphasises both the bright side and the dark side of the Revolutionary army. Its bright side was the passionate patriotism of the volunteers. Its dark side was their mutinous indiscipline. He writes on 6th May :—

" Before leaving La Rochelle I received the letter which you did me the honour and favour of writing to me. I perceived in it a fresh proof of your affection for me. I was not surprised, because I knew how tender-hearted and kind you are. . . .

[a] Cf. *Victoires, Conquêtes*, i. 9; Lahure, 15, 16.

"You know, I suppose, that the fortune of war has been against us in an opening engagement, near Mons. It is said that M. Dillon has paid with his life for either his inexperience or his treachery. I express neither blame nor approval of M. Dillon's conduct. Until I am better informed, I suspend my judgment upon an incident, which may bring in its train the greatest misfortunes. Unless the Government bestirs itself to obviate the incalculable evils which licence and frenzy carry in their train, punishments of this kind, which troops may claim the right to inflict on their chiefs, may deprive us of good generals as well as of bad ones. If the French officers are deficient in energy and courage, I see no resource that can save the army from destruction. Having been a soldier since my boyhood, I know the errors and follies, of which soldiers are capable. I also know something of the way in which their affection and respect can be won, when it is not too late to recall them to their duty. But, unfortunately, those, who are entrusted with the highest command, either dare not, or will not, show themselves in critical moments."[a]

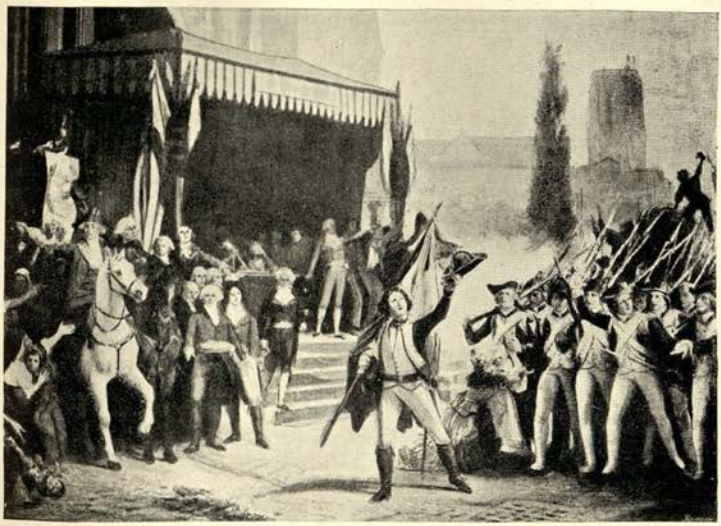
He proceeds in the same letter to discuss the question of his regimental prospects, and concludes by making a declaration as to the rules of life in obedience to which he intended to shape his conduct.

"Whatever happens, I shall not desert my post; and my honour and my duty shall always be my guiding motives. . . . Farewell, my dear brother. I beg of you to express to my dear mother and sister my affectionate feelings for them. Embrace them for me. . . . Receive my affectionate regards, and believe me that I shall always follow the call of my conscience (*le cri de mon conscience*)."

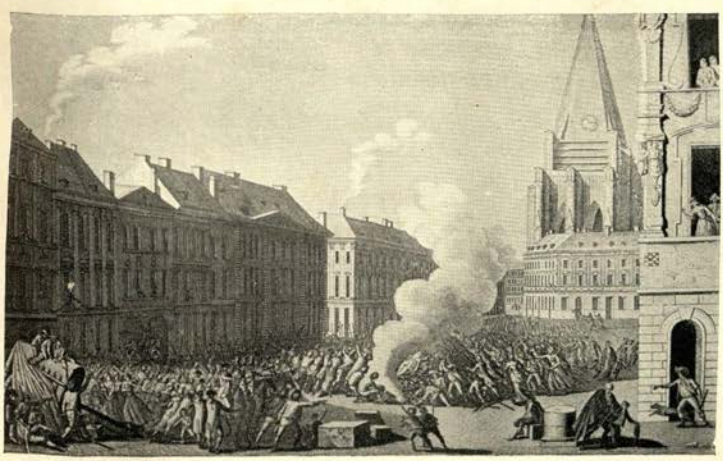
There is no reason to suppose that the writer of this intimate letter was posing, or that he was indulging in affected heroics, when he assured his brother that he would always be guided by lofty

[a] Wrangel, 84–86.

TWO PHASES OF THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMY IN 1792.



THE VOLUNTEERS OF 1792.
After a picture in the Gallery at Versailles.



THE ASSASSINATION OF GENERAL DILLON, APRIL 1792.
After the picture by Prieur.

"The revolutionary army had its bright side and its dark side. Its bright side was in the passionate patriotism of the volunteers. Its dark side was their mutinous indiscipline" (p. 47).

To face page 48.

motives, and that he would follow the call of his conscience. We shall find this phrase, *cri de conscience*, recurring more than once in Bernadotte's correspondence.[a] It is characteristic of the Gascon point of view, that the word "cri" should be applied to what we are in the habit of referring to as "a still small voice." But, although there was in this letter a touch of racial emotionalism, is there any reason to doubt that this young officer sincerely regarded his new rank as a post of duty and of honour?

The defeat of the French invaders at Mons, and the death of General Dillon under a charge of treachery, helped materially to aggravate the growing spirit of military insubordination and popular distrust. The army suspected their aristocratic generals. The unfortunate King and Queen were drifting into a hopelessly false position, because France was being invaded for the ostensible purpose of rescuing them from their own ministers and from their own subjects. Thenceforward the course of events in the capital moved more swiftly to their inevitable catastrophe.

[a] Chapter XLV., page 266; and Chapter LXVIII., page 366.

CHAPTER VIII

BERNADOTTE SENT TO THE FRONT — HE LEARNS "THE PRECIOUS WORTH OF LIBERTY"

JULY–SEPTEMBER 1792

"I hope soon to be captain. I am at present the fourth lieutenant. But these reflections do not please me so much as the thought of Liberty, of which I know to-day the precious worth."—*Extract from letter of Bernadotte to his brother, 20th July* 1792.

THE 36th Regiment started from St. Servan, for service at the front, on 15th July 1792;[a] and on 20th July were at Mayenne, where Bernadotte wrote the following letter to his brother:—

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I have been since the 15th instant on the march to join the army of the north. Cambrai is the point where several regiments are to muster; and the 36th Regiment is due there on the 6th proximo. Although my health is not yet re-established . . . I am delighted to enter upon active service, and to fight for such a righteous cause. I have the good fortune to be in a regiment which is not divided. Discipline is regularly observed, and the purest patriotism animates them. I hope soon to be captain. I am at present the fourth lieutenant. But these reflections do not please me so much as the thought of Liberty, of which I know to-day the precious worth. I do not know, my dear brother, whether I shall ever see you again. . . . Perhaps I shall swell the number of brave men who have perished in defence of their country. Take charge of a thousand embraces for my dear mother and sister, and accept the friendship of a brother, who loves you beyond the power of words, and who will always be worthy of belonging to you.

"J. B. BERNADOTTE,
"Lieutenant of 36th Regt. Infty.
"MAYENNE, 20*th July* 1792."[b]

[a] Hans Kloeber, 27. [b] Wrangel, 87, 88.

This letter reflects Bernadotte's outlook at this point of his career. He was in his thirtieth year. He had just won his commission on his merits from the Minister of War, when he was about to receive it from the unanimous vote of the officers of his regiment. He had passed through every non-commissioned rank, and knew every detail of the routine and practice of his profession. He had lived under a regime, which excluded him from all hope of promotion; and he had served it loyally, risking his life, spending his popularity, and exerting his presence of mind to protect his colonel and officers.

The exclusive system was gone, and with it had passed away what was for men like him the galling bondage of an artificial serfdom. "The thought of Liberty, of which I know to-day the precious worth." That sentence in his letter of 20th July summed up his political creed. The word liberty was on every-one's lips in 1792, and was soiled by much ignoble use. It has been truly said that its worshippers "deified the name and proscribed the thing." But the word rang true in the ears of emancipated citizen-soldiers like Bernadotte. The Revolution carried to them an inspiring message, by calling upon them to fight for the independence of the nation, and by promising them all the advancement, of which they might prove themselves worthy. They responded to that message, in the spirit of this letter, and entered upon the wars of the Revolution, animated by patriotic ardour, and fired by the fresh fascination of an unfettered future.

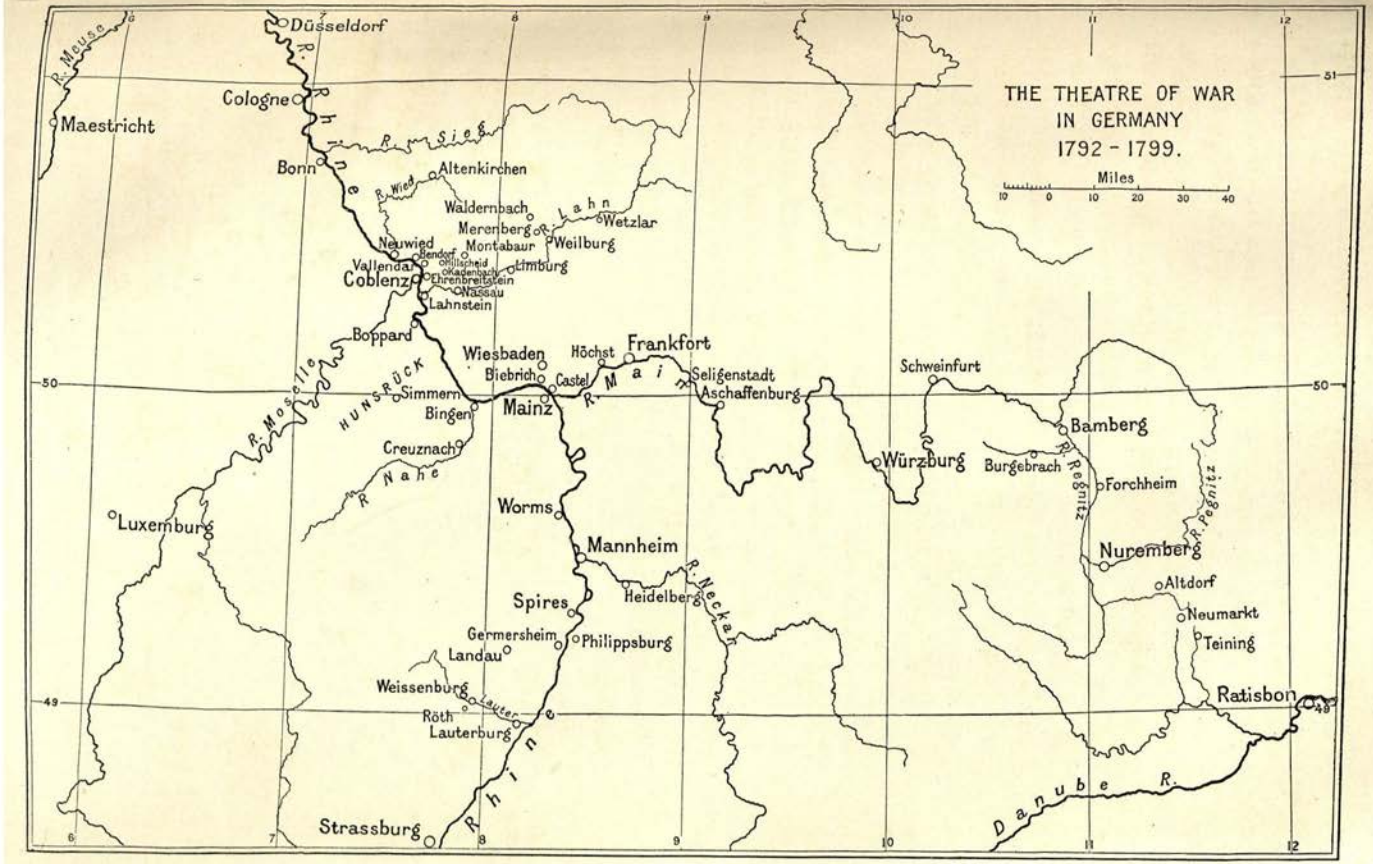
When the 36th Regiment reached Cambrai, they were directed to join the army of General Custine on the frontiers of Alsace.

During the summer months the Revolution had

ripened with rapidity ; and the war, after a brief lull, had broken out again. It was the period of Danton's ascendancy. The Prussians published a violent and ill-conceived proclamation which was intended to intimidate, but only served to exasperate, the Revolutionary forces of Paris. They invaded France and were repulsed at Valmy, after Danton had flung at them his passionate declaration of foreign policy : " Il nous faut de l'audace, et encore de l'audace, et toujours de l'audace."[a] Meanwhile, the storming of the Tuileries, the suspension of the King, the imprisonment of the Royal Family, and the horrors of the September Massacres, marked the downfall of the Monarchy and the enthronement of Anarchy.

Bernadotte had no influence upon, or part in, the political events of 1792. While they were being enacted in Paris, he was a lieutenant marching with his regiment from Brittany to the Rhine. He is free from responsibility for events, which he did not even witness, as Bonaparte did, and could, no more than Bonaparte, prevent or mitigate.

[a] Sorel, ii. 33.



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CHAPTER IX

General Custine's First Campaign[a]

September 1792–February 1793

"Le General Moustache."—*Custine's nickname in the army.*

Bernadotte now became a subaltern officer in the army of General Custine, whose remarkable personality deserves more than a mere passing reference.[b]

General Count Adam-Philippe de Custine de Sarrack—such was his full nomenclature—was an aristocrat, who had, under the old regime, enjoyed to the full the peculiar rights of the privileged class to which he belonged. The pace of his advancement may be contrasted with that of a bourgeois soldier like Bernadotte. He obtained a lieutenant's commission at the tender age of seven, and received his baptism of fire at the age of eight. At the age of twenty-three he stepped into the command of a regiment of dragoons, which was called, after their youthful commander, the Custine Dragoons. He served with distinction in the American War of Independence, and was fond of boasting that he had fought in two hemispheres, under Maurice de Saxe and under Washington. Elected in 1789 by the nobility of his province as a Deputy to the States-General, he plunged with enthusiasm into the vortex of the French Revolution, and espoused all its theories, without knowing what they meant, until he learnt the grim lesson, four years afterwards, from the public executioner. In the meantime, the emigration of his own class had cleared his way to rapid promotion, and had raised him to the command of the army,

[a] See p. 61 *infra*, n.

[b] *Les Français sur le Rhin*, 177, 178.

which Bernadotte's regiment had been sent to reinforce. His portrait explains the nickname of "General Moustache," by which he was generally known.[a]

The 36th Regiment joined Custine's army at Weissenburg about the 22nd September, and crossed the Alsatian frontier on the 29th. A campaign of three weeks resulted in the capture of the three great Rhenish cities of Spires, Worms, and Mainz, and in making the Rhine the boundary of France as far as Bingen. Bernadotte was present at the taking of Spires and Mainz. After the capitulation of Mainz (21st October) his battalion was sent to garrison Bingen, the northern outpost on the Rhine.

After the taking of the Rhenish cities, General Custine made a serious blunder. Instead of being content to confine his operations to the western bank of the Rhine, he sent a detachment into Germany, which took Frankfort by surprise. The rashness of this raid was soon made apparent. The Germans quickly collected themselves, retook Frankfort, and drove the French back again behind the Rhine. Such was Custine's first campaign. His invasion of Germany had miscarried. But he retained the three Rhenish cities, and the Rhine remained the frontier of France from Lauterburg to Bingen. It suited the politicians in Paris to magnify his achievements. His admirers dubbed him Germanicus ; and he became the protégé of Danton, and the military hero of the hour.

Bernadotte's battalion did not take part in the raid on Frankfort, but remained at Bingen, where he was given his first independent command. He led a foray and captured a rich convoy. The best proof of his having done his duty in the campaign is afforded by the fact that he was on the 30th November appointed adjutant-

[a] *L'Expédition de Custine*, 33 et seq.

major of the regiment. He was also made adjutant of the garrison of Bingen. He gives an account of his duties and of his outlook in the following letter to his brother:—

"I have received, my dear brother, the letter which you were so kind as to write to me. I was uneasy on your account, and on that of my dear mother and sister. . . . I am grateful for the good advice which you have given me. . . . I shall avail myself of it by always regarding it as an obligation of duty to obey the sentiments, with which you have inspired me. . . . The proximity of the Prussians, who passed the Rhine on the day before yesterday, serves to rouse my spirits. I am discharging the duties of garrison adjutant at Bingen. In addition to my special functions as adjutant-major of my regiment, the superintendence of the boats on the left bank of the Rhine has been entrusted to me. You can see that I have no time to spare. I expect that within two or three days we shall be in grips with 'Messieurs les stipendiaries.' I am delighted, because, although I was present at the taking of Spires and Mainz, I did not see the enemy at close quarters. However, I took part in the operations, and also as commandant, although only a subaltern, at the taking of a convoy. Give my love to my sister and my respects to my mother. Farewell. I write in haste. I embrace you all.

"J. BERNADOTTE, Adjutant.

"BINGEN, *20th Feb.* 1793."[a]

A few weeks before the writing of this letter, the news of the execution of the King had reached the army. Ignorance or prejudice has led some writers to say of Bernadotte, after he became a king, that he had been a regicide. Few men of the time could offer a better alibi to such a charge. During the whole of the events which led up to, and culminated in, the death of the King, Bernadotte was serving with his regiment on the Rhine frontier.

[a] Wrangel, 89, 90.

CHAPTER X

CUSTINE'S SECOND CAMPAIGN, AND EXECUTION

MARCH–MAY 1793

"All the officers congratulate me on my zeal and success. The soldiers speak of me with enthusiasm. But everything stops there, because nobody informed the commander-in-chief of my conduct. The actions of subalterns often remain unnoticed, while the mistakes of commanders pass for high achievements. However, I shall not, on that account, render less faithful service to the Republic."—*Extract from Bernadotte's letter to his brother, dated 26th May 1793.*

BERNADOTTE in his letter of 20th February expressed the hope soon to be in grips with the enemy. The speedy fulfilment of his wish was followed by disaster. The Germans, in March, recrossed the Rhine in superior numbers, and, in spite of a gallant but ineffectual stand, which General Houchard made at Niedersförsheim, carried all before them, driving Custine's army back to the lines of Weissenburg, where Bernadotte had found them in the previous September. Such was the inglorious end of Custine's second campaign. Nothing remained of the conquests of the preceding six months except the now beleaguered city of Mainz.

Bernadotte, who was serving in Houchard's brigade, was, in the course of this retreat, for the first time, a witness of a mutiny in the field. A battalion of his regiment, encouraged by one of their captains, halted on the march, and declared General Custine a traitor to his country. It appears from Custine's despatch,

[a] *Moniteur*, 19th April 1792.

that he was informed of the *émeute* by the adjutant of the 36th Regiment, presumably Bernadotte.[a] The mutinous captain, after an altercation with Custine, left the army and denounced the general to the authorities in Paris. But Danton was still in power, and Custine's hour of trial had not come.

In May we find Bernadotte in the camp of Röth, near Weissenburg, asking his brother, in the following letter, dated 16th May, to obtain for him the lieutenant-colonelcy of a battalion :—

"I would have put off writing until to-morrow, if an order had not just reached us to be ready to march at seven o'clock. I presume that we are going beyond Landau to take part in some *coup de main*. I have such a multiplicity of military duties that I have only time to thank you for all the trouble you are taking to obtain a speedy realisation of my desires. This new proof of your affection does not surprise me, and I am deeply grateful. If you can procure my appointment to one of the battalions which is about to be formed, it will suit me perfectly, because, with my experience and my knowledge of the details of my profession, I hope to be able to make myself useful. I count on you, and I am confident that you will support me strongly. Embrace for me my dear mother and sister. Receive my kind regards. The hour approaches. I am called away to my duty. —I am your brother and friend,

"J. BERNADOTTE.

"THE ARMY OF THE RHINE,
"THE CAMP OF RÖTH.

"As the generals do nothing without a mémoire of services, I enclose a form of mémoire which you can make use of, if you apply to them or to the Minister of War."[a]

Enclosed was Bernadotte's record of his services

[a] Wrangel, 92, 94.

up to date, written in his own handwriting. It ran as follows :—

"Army of the Rhine, 36th Regiment of Infantry.

"Mémoire to obtain a Lieutenant-Colonelcy in the new corps which are to compose the Army of the Pyrenees.

"JEAN BAPTISTE BERNADOTTE.

"*Record of Services*

"Born 26th January 1763, at Pau, in the department of Basses Pyrénées. Enlisted as a soldier 3rd November 1780; grenadier, 20th May 1782; corporal, 13th June 1785; sergeant, 31st August 1785; quarter-master, 21st June 1786; sergeant-major, 11th May 1788; adjutant, 7th February 1790, in the 60th Regiment.

"Transferred from the 60th Regiment to be lieutenant in the 36th Regiment, 6th November 1791; adjutant-major, 30th November 1792; rank of captain by virtue of the law of 24th December, which assimilated troops of the line to the volunteers, the adjutant-major of the latter corps having the rank of captain under the decree which created them."[a]

Then follows his application for promotion :—

"Jean Baptiste Bernadotte seeks employment as lieutenant-colonel in the new corps which are to compose the Army of the Pyrenees, and relies, in support of his application, upon thirteen years' continuous service, two campaigns, and more particularly upon the experience, which he has gained in all the grades, through which he has passed from soldier to adjutant-major, of the theory and practice of the service, which qualifies him to instruct a battalion in the details of manœuvres, military police, and discipline."[a]

It will be observed that, in this memoir of his services, Bernadotte claimed, as adjutant-major, to possess the rank of captain. This claim was open to a doubt, which was removed in his case by the

[a] Wrangel, 92–94

action of his corps in electing him captain, as will be related in the next chapter.

In his letter of 16th May, Bernadotte informed his brother that he was to take part in an expeditionary *coup de main* on the following day. This was an ill-designed, ill-executed, and ill-fated attack which Custine, for the purpose of relieving Mainz, directed against the Austrian position at Rülzheim on 17th May.

In the course of this operation some raw volunteers mistook some of their own chasseurs for Austrians, and fired on them, with the result that a panic seized the troops at the head of the line. Murmurs were heard, followed by shouts of "Sauve qui peut" and "We are lost." Some mounted troops turned and fled, throwing the columns into confusion and consternation.[a] The artillery took to flight, and the disorder seemed complete, the troops in front falling back upon those behind, and the line of battle degenerating into a mixed mêlée. The commanding officers were unable to restore order. Now came the young Gascon adjutant-major's chance. The scene may be best described in his own graphic account, written to his brother in a letter dated 26th May 1793 :—

"While others sought safety in flight, I was overwhelmed with a feeling of indignation and fury at this humiliating spectacle. Seeing no superior officer capable of restoring discipline, I rush to the centre of the disordered battalion—I shout, I protest, I implore, I command. The noise and confusion was so great that the men could not hear me. A thousand musket-shots are heard, some of which I avoid by deflecting musket-barrels with the point of my sword. I rush to the rear of the battalion, which had become the head. My horse is knocked down, but I keep my position, and

[a] *Wissembourg* (Chuquet), 18.

say to the men: 'Soldiers, this is the rallying-point. You have been thrown back to this point in spite of yourselves. You will go back no farther. I am confident that you will hold your ground. Your ramparts are your bayonets and your courage. Let others by a cowardly flight show themselves unworthy of liberty; but let us, if necessary, die at our post shouting "Vive la Republique, vive la Nation." Let us rally, my friends, and march against those hired slaves. Let us march resolved to conquer, and it will be no easy task to defeat us.' To speak, to think, to act, to be obeyed was the work of a minute. The soldiers heard me, and several voices exclaimed, 'Let us march against the enemy led by the adjutant-major.' I formed them in order of battle, and I checked the confusion, which would have affected six other battalions behind me. I made the gunners return to their post, and I placed men on guard with orders to fire on the drivers if they turned to fly. The enemy did not dare to continue the pursuit. Calm was restored. The *coup* which had been in contemplation failed, but we remained masters of the field of battle. The enemy suffered heavy losses, and so did we. The army returned to Wissembourg after having marched eighteen leagues without a halt. All the officers congratulated me on my zeal and success. The soldiers speak of me with enthusiasm. But everything stops there, because nobody informed the commander-in-chief of my conduct. The actions of subalterns often remain unnoticed, while the mistakes of commanders pass for high achievements. However, I shall not, on that account, render less faithful service to the Republic . . . to which I am devoted. Adieu. Embrace my dear mother.

"J. BERNADOTTE.

"WISSEMBOURG, *26th May* 1793."[a]

In an earlier part of the same letter, Bernadotte deplores his bad luck in not having been mentioned in the despatch, which was sent by Custine to the Convention describing this affair. His conduct did

[a] Wrangel, 99–100.

General Houchard.
Guillotined in September 1793.

General Custine.
Guillotined in August 1793.

Two Generals under whom Bernadotte served as a young officer.
After portraits of the period.

To face page 60.

not, however, escape notice so entirely as he imagined. His men soon took an opportunity of rewarding it.

Let us follow Custine to his end. He was transferred to the command of the army of the North, where a military reverse was followed by the fall from power of his political patron, Danton. He was summoned to Paris in July, and was arraigned before the Revolutionary Tribunal on a charge of treason, which was so groundless that the Revolutionary Tribunal itself appears to have hesitated, after a protracted trial, to convict him; but the orators of the Convention and of the Clubs demanded his life, and his fate was sealed. He defended himself with courage and ability. He had always been overbearing with his officers, several of whom testified against him. There was one noteworthy exception—namely, Kléber, who showed characteristic fortitude and independence by giving evidence in his favour, regardless of Fouquier Tinville's gestures of disapproval. A feature of the trial was the courage and devotion of Custine's daughter-in-law, Delphine de Sabran, Marquise de Custine, who attended the terrible Tribunal every day and supported him to the end by her presence and by her sympathy. He was guillotined on 28th August. Thus perished poor "General Moustache," Bernadotte's first commander-in-chief.[a]

[a] Information about General Custine, his two campaigns, and his trial and execution, is to be found in *Les Français sur le Rhin*, par Alfred Rambaud; *Custine et Houchard*, par Gay de Vernon; in three of Arthur Chuquet's admirable volumes on the wars of the Revolution, *L'Expédition de Custine*, *Mayence*, and *Wissembourg*; and in *Delphine de Sabran, Marquise de Custine*, par Maugars et de Croze, chap. xiv.

CHAPTER XI

BERNADOTTE SERVES UNDER GENERAL BEAUHARNAIS AND BECOMES CAPTAIN

JULY 1793

"Beauharnais, who shall get kings, though he be none."—CARLYLE.

"Our generals shout, 'Hatred to Kings,' 'War on Tyrants.'"—*Extract from Bernadotte's letter to his brother, July* 1793.

CUSTINE was, after a brief interval, succeeded in command of the Army of the Rhine by General Alexandre de Beauharnais, the first husband of the lady known to history as the Empress Josephine; and Bernadotte served under that ill-fated general until the close of July.

Beauharnais, like Custine, was one of the aristocratic officers of the old régime, who had rallied to the Revolution; but he was a different type from Custine. He was a modest gentleman, a formal sentimentalist, who took the Revolution seriously, and paid the penalty. He has thus been summed up by a competent authority: "Beauharnais was a well-trained soldier, but a poor one. He lacked the *coup d'œil* and instinct requisite for the field of battle. He was weak, timid, wanting in nerve and resolution, . . . afraid of compromising himself, and deficient in self-confidence."[a] Custine had left behind him a legacy of disaster, which a stronger man than Beauharnais might have found it difficult to retrieve. His object was to relieve the beleaguered city of Mainz; and military critics are of opinion that, if he had

[a] *Wissembourg* (Chuquet), 44.

concentrated his troops, instead of scattering them in an extended line, he might have struck a decisive blow. But Beauharnais failed to strike.[a] Precious time slipped away, until the garrison of Mainz, having eaten their horses, were forced to surrender on 23rd July.

Two letters of Bernadotte's, written in July 1793, present a picture of the occupations and ambitions of the young officer, when he was serving under Beauharnais :—

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—Yesterday I received your letter of 16th June. I had begun to feel anxiety at your silence. I was disturbed by a thousand painful apprehensions. The knowledge that the town, in which you live, is so near the theatre of war filled me with alarm on your account and that of my dear mother and sister. Happily, all my fears are now set at rest. . . . Although the confidence, which the soldiers of the battalion display towards me, should partly make up for the delay in my promotion which has been caused by the dismissal of General Servan, I confess frankly that I hold strongly to the hope of finding myself near you. My knowledge of the country, my familiarity with the language of the people, and my desire to make myself useful, all these things make me hope that I could fill with some success a place in your army. You seem to be more inclined to apply for a staff appointment than for the command of a battalion. But the latter would suit me best, because I am broken into all the details of that kind of work, particularly in manœuvres and other departments of military discipline. Whatever you do for me will be agreeable to me, and you may be sure that my gratitude will equal your good intentions on my behalf. . . . My duties prevented me continuing my letter of the 1st inst. Since then our brigade has been the victim of a false alarm. The 1st battalion had been sent to reconnoitre the enemy, and I had as usual to point out to the commanding officer the position which he should take up,

[a] *Gouvin St. Cyr*, par Gay de Vernon, 10.

and the spot on which to post his batteries. The enemy did not show themselves, and the battalion returned in the vain hope of getting some rest. Hardly had the men laid down their arms than they heard the alarm sounded. I formed them in order of battle in two minutes. The generals came up and announced that we were to change camps on the next day, the 3rd. The army struck camp yesterday, the 3rd, at 3 a.m., and after marching for four leagues in front of the enemy, and preserving order under difficulties, occupied the plains of Maintfel. . . . The soldiers appeared to be in the best heart and to be ready to give a good account of themselves in battle. Our generals shout, 'Hatred to Kings,' 'War on Tyrants,' 'Vive la Republique.' . . . But Dumouriez, the infamous Dumouriez, has betrayed us. Adieu, my dear brother. I love you very sincerely. Embrace for me my dear mother and sister.

"CAMP OF MAINTFEL, *4th July* 1793. *The 2nd year of the French Republic, one and indivisible.*"[a]

Bernadotte mentions, in this letter, that his promotion had been delayed by the dismissal of General Servan. This individual was an ex-War Minister, and a Girondist, who, in consequence of the fall of his party, had been suspended from his post as general of division. The fall of the Girondists was the main episode of Revolutionary history in the months of May and June 1793. To the young officer on the north-eastern frontier the fall of the Girondists meant nothing more than a consequential delay in his promotion.

In this letter Bernadotte also refers to another event of historical importance—the "treason" of General Dumouriez. Three months had passed since the happening of that event (5th April), but the full effect of his desertion to the enemy was only now

[a] Wrangel, 103, 104.

beginning to be felt. It had led to a surveillance being exercised over all the officers of the Republic. The Military Terror, of which General Custine's execution was one of the object-lessons, received an impetus from General Dumouriez's defection.

Another allusion in this letter, which deserves to be noted, is the first appearance in his correspondence of a reference to the Revolutionary Calendar. The letter is dated "the 4th July 1793, the 2nd year of the French Republic, one and indivisible." The National Convention had, on 22nd September 1792, declared that all public acts should be dated as of the first year of the Republic; but the Revolutionary Calendar was not officially introduced until November 1793, when it was reckoned not from 1st January 1793, but, for reasons both zodiacal and political, from 22nd September 1792. Accordingly, Bernadotte turned out not to be correct in dating his letter "in the second year" of the Republic. His way of dating it, by naming the year and month of the Christian calendar, with an added reference to the Republican year, seems to offer an illustration of the transition stage, through which the public mind was passing in reference to the calendar. The idea of a Republican year had seized upon the imagination of citizens and soldiers; but the calendar itself, with its arbitrary New Year's Day, and its fantastic catalogue of months and weeks, had not yet been drawn up by the poets and scientists, whose ideas were afterwards embodied in the decree of the Convention.

A few days afterwards, Bernadotte wrote another letter to his brother, in which he describes the arduous duties of a regimental adjutant at this period. The letter is dated 8th July, and is from the same camp:—

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—Do all you can to get me one of the battalions to be composed of the new companies which are without commanding officers. It is still doubtful whether adjutant-majors have the rank of captain. The law is not clear upon the point. I am terribly hard worked. The lieutenant-colonel of the brigade has just asked the general to let me help him in the work of his command. Besides that, I instruct the battalion, and have also to superintend the instruction of the non-commissioned officers, as well as of about 300 recruits who arrived lately. The highly placed officers do nothing, so to speak, except canter their horses up and down. The soldiers and the non-commissioned officers show towards me an attachment which is very gratifying. But you know men. When intrigue is at work, they overthrow the idol, which they worshipped a moment before. I know citizen Champeaux, Deputy of the Department des Côtes du Nord, President of the Committee of Marine. Bear this in mind, if it should be necessary to seek his influence. At all events, leave nothing undone to get me a battalion, because one must try to take the ball on the bound.

"*8th July* 1793."[a]

Ten days after the writing of this letter, all doubt was removed as to Bernadotte's right to the rank of captain. At this period of the Revolution, two-thirds of regimental promotions were decided by election. He now received his reward for his services in Custine's campaigns, and for his action in rallying his regiment on 17th May, for on 18th July, in the camp behind the lines of Weissembourg, he was elected captain by the votes of his corps.

Beauharnais was never forgiven for his failure to relieve Mainz. Popular vengeance loitered, as he had loitered; but, unlike him, did not fail to strike. He was arrested during the Terror, and fell by the guillotine, little thinking that his widow, Josephine, was to be Empress of the French; his son, Eugène,

[a] Wrangel, 105, 106.

Viceroy of Italy; and his daughter, Hortense, Queen of Holland. Still less could he have dreamed that a grandchild of his would become Queen of Sweden, by virtue of her marriage to the son of Captain Jean Baptiste Bernadotte of the 36th Regiment, lately serving under him in the army of the Rhine. This grandchild was a daughter of Eugène Beauharnais, who was by Napoleon's order named after her grandmother, the Empress Josephine. She married Bernadotte's son, and became Queen Josephine of Sweden.

CHAPTER XII

BERNADOTTE SERVES UNDER GENERAL HOUCHARD IN THE NORTH, AND BECOMES LIEUTENANT-COLONEL —THE EXECUTION OF HOUCHARD AND OF THE QUEEN

AUGUST–DECEMBER 1793

"Bernadotte Chef de Bataillon (élu par 660 voix le 8 Août 1793, confirmé le 8 Février 1794)."—*Archives Administratives du Ministère de la Guerre.*

AT the close of General Beauharnais' abortive campaign, the 36th Regiment was ordered to proceed from the Rhine to the Belgian frontier, to reinforce the army of the North. While on his march to the north, Bernadotte received a fresh mark of confidence from his regiment. On the 8th August, within three weeks after his election as captain, he was chosen by 660 votes to be lieutenant-colonel of his battalion.

On or about 1st September, Bernadotte's battalion, after its long wagon march from the Alsatian frontier, filed into the camp at Gavrelle, near Biache, on the river Scarpe, between Arras and Douai. This position formed a link in a chain of camps and fortresses, which dotted the Belgian frontier from the sea to the river Sambre. The frontier was defended, to the east of the river Sambre, by the army of the Ardennes, and to the west of the Sambre by the army of the North, of which General Houchard, who had been Custine's vanguard leader, was the commander-in-chief. His was a perilous position ; but the perils of war were the least of its dangers.

General Houchard was a different type from

Custine or Beauharnais. He was a man of the people, a plebeian, a *soldat parvenu*. His conspicuous valour in the field led to his promotion to a position, which was beyond his capabilities. He appears to have been a gallant officer, well qualified to lead a vanguard, but unequal to the command of a large army. He had asked for reinforcements; and the 36th Regiment was one of the corps sent to his assistance. The moment was a critical one, and his life was staked on the issue.

The immediate object of French strategy was the relief of Dunkirk, which was closely invested by the Allies, some of whose troops were posted along the little river Yser. The 36th Regiment, immediately after its arrival, was sent to this point, and on the 4th and 5th September, was engaged with the enemy on the banks of the Yser. Then followed several days' severe fighting, known in history as the battle of Hondschoote, which culminated in the taking of the village of that name on 8th September, and was followed by the retreat of the Allies. The 36th Regiment took part in the battle; and, having been sent in pursuit with some cavalry, took five hundred prisoners, and assisted at the capture of two fortified places, Wervick and Menin.

It seemed, for the moment, that Houchard had won a great victory, and that the Allies were routed. But the exaltation, caused by the victory of Hondschoote, was quickly dispelled by the disasters, which befell three other frontier fortresses, one of which capitulated, while the garrisons of two others were nearly cut to pieces, as the result of ill-executed sorties. Owing to these reverses, all the fruits of Hondschoote were lost as quickly as they had been won. The rejoicings, which followed on Houchard's victory,

had hardly died away, when reproaches for his failure to reap its fruits began to assail him. On 13th September Carnot wrote to Houchard congratulating him upon his brilliant success.[a] In less than ten days he was disgraced and doomed.

Houchard was arrested on 23rd September, conducted to Paris, and sent first to the Abbaye, and then to the Conciergerie, where twenty-four generals were, at this period, imprisoned. He seems to have been pursued with exceptional fury and unfairness. The public mind was saturated with suspicion; and the politicians were blinded by political passion. One day's trial sufficed to bring this gallant and unfortunate soldier to the scaffold. When one of the judges of the Revolutionary Tribunal added insult to injury by attributing cowardice to him, Houchard bared his breast, which was furrowed with three sabre-cuts, and exclaimed, "Look, and read my reply." Of all the judicial murders, which were perpetrated upon the generals of the Republic in the years 1793 and 1794, none appears to have been more unjustified even by any scintilla of suspicion than that of Houchard. None more deeply shocked and alarmed the higher ranks of the army.

Bernadotte now came under the command of a general, of whom we shall hear much in this volume. This was General Jourdan, who had risen in a few months from the rank of colonel to that of commander-in-chief. Jourdan was a brave soldier, who had, like Bernadotte, served in the ranks of the royal army, and was a competent, if not a brilliant, commander. He was, what was more rare in those days, a modest, straightforward man, who desired nothing less than the command, which was now thrust upon

[a] Bonnal de Ganges, i. 483.

him. But a refusal would have been looked upon as proof positive of treachery. He had no alternative but to accept.

On 17th October, Jourdan won the battle of Wattignies, at which Bernadotte's regiment was present in the reserve. Jourdan had a narrow escape of arrest at the close of the campaign, and appears to have owed his immunity to a modesty and self-effacement, which disarmed jealousy. After Wattignies the army took up winter quarters, and Bernadotte's regiment returned to the camp of Gavrelle.

In the meantime, the Revolution had been running its riotous course. In October came its crowning infamy, the execution of Queen Marie Antoinette. The personality of the Queen had lost its political significance; but hardly any event more deeply offended the sentiment of the British Isles, which was voiced by Edmund Burke, when he lamented, in words, which time and repetition have failed to hackney, that the age of chivalry was gone and the glory of Europe extinguished. Public opinion, which had been shocked at the September Massacres, and deeply affected by the execution of the King, became definitely alienated from all the ideas and methods of the French Revolution; and few, if any, remained who would have ventured to repeat Thomas Paine's old taunt that Burke was only touched by the showy resemblance of distress; that he "pitied the plumage, and forgot the dying bird." The Queen was executed in October 1793. In November she was followed to the scaffold by a host of her enemies, including the Girondists, Madame Roland, and Philippe Égalité.

It is not surprising that the recollection of all the horrors, which were enacted in Paris and in the pro-

vinces in 1793 and 1794, should have prejudiced the public mind against any personage who, like Bernadotte, could be regarded as a child of the Revolution. He was its offspring, in the sense that the overthrow of the old régime opened a career to his merits. But what responsibility for these horrors can attach to a young officer in a marching regiment, who was fighting on the frontier, as in duty bound, in a national war? If he was a child of the Revolution, he had no share in the crimes of his parent.[a]

[a] Information about General Houchard's campaign and tragical death is to be found in *Custine et Houchard*, par Gay de Vernon; *Hondschoote*, par Arthur Chuquet; *Victoires, Conquêtes*, ii. 9–20, 74–93; Lahure, 55-63.

CHAPTER XIII

BERNADOTTE BECOMES COLONEL—"JUPITER STATOR DES MUTINS"

FEBRUARY–APRIL 1794

"To obey the laws and the military regulations, to maintain liberty, equality, the Constitution, and the unity and indivisibility of the French Republic—or to die."—*Oath taken by Colonel Bernadotte and the 71st demi-brigade, 4th April* 1794.

"If you dishonour yourselves by flight, I refuse to remain your colonel."—*Colonel Bernadotte to his men, April* 1794.

BERNADOTTE appears to have spent the winter months, from the end of October 1793 to the end of March 1794, in the camp of Gavrelle between Arras and Douai. The opposing armies confronted each other along the Belgian frontier. There were upwards of 130,000 men on each side extended from the river Sambre to the sea.

In February 1794 Bernadotte's election as lieutenant-colonel of his battalion was officially confirmed by the Minister of War; but he was not allowed to remain for many weeks in that position.

In the spring of 1794 certain drastic changes in the distribution of the various corps of the French army, which had been decreed by the National Convention, were carried into effect in the army of the North. The main object of these changes was to weld into one homogeneous whole the diverse elements of which the new Republican army was composed. The infantry was to be reconstituted into units, each of which was to consist of three battalions instead of two. These new corps were called half-

brigades. Each half-brigade was composed of three battalions, drawn respectively from the regular troops, the volunteers, and the other new levies. This fusion of the old and the new elements of the Revolutionary army was effected by the Law of Embrigadement, and was popularly known as The Amalgam.

In consequence of these reforms, the battalion, of which Bernadotte was lieutenant-colonel, became part of the new 71st half-brigade, being linked with the "2nd battalion de la Meuse"; with the "13th battalion des Fédérés" consisting largely of new volunteers; and with a company of artillery. Bernadotte, a few weeks after the official confirmation of his promotion to the lieutenant-colonelcy of his battalion, was on the 4th April appointed colonel of the 71st half-brigade.

The law provided that the incorporation of each new half-brigade was to be made the occasion of an impressive ceremony. Let us describe what occurred in the case of the incorporation of the 71st.[a]

The new corps assembled, and, after hearing the law read by the Representatives of the People, the officers and men joined in taking the prescribed oath, which bound them "to obey the laws and the military regulations, and to maintain liberty, equality, the Constitution, and the unity and indivisibility of the French Republic—or to die." After the oath had been taken, all weapons were laid aside; the three battalions and the artillery company mixed with one another; officers and soldiers exchanged the kiss of brotherhood. Then, at a given signal, the soldiers resumed their arms and places; and the newly formed 71st half-brigade, under command of Colonel Bernadotte, marched past the Representatives of the People.

[a] Coutanceau, 537.

Bernadotte had reached the limit of his ambition and, as he believed, of his usefulness. He neither dreamed nor hoped that, in less than three months, he would be a general.

The 71st half-brigade formed, in April 1794, part of the army of the North. Jourdan had been replaced in the command of that army by General Pichegru. Bernadotte, who was in General Goguet's division, remained with the army of the North for the greater part of April, and was entrusted with the command of the fort of Prémont, which covered the road to St. Quentin.

On 17th April the allied forces advanced, attacking the French positions all along the line. Prémont, of which Bernadotte had charge, was one of the most important of these positions. The place was attacked by a column of the Austrian army consisting of eleven battalions of infantry, six squadrons of cavalry, and a formidable artillery. Bernadotte's detachment was a comparatively small one, consisting of three battalions, six guns, and a regiment of cavalry. Placed in a position of serious danger, he sustained the courage of his men by his personal example and by floods of Gascon oratory, and only retreated after he had kept the enemy in check for seven hours. In the evening the Representatives of the People and several of the generals came to Bernadotte and heartily congratulated him upon the day's work.[a]

A few days afterwards, on 21st April, the French army was advancing along the river Helpe to the relief of Landrecies, when the right and centre of General Goguet's division suddenly gave way and retired in the face of the enemy. Bernadotte,

[a] Lafosse, 53, 54; Sarrans, 6.

commanding the left wing, was advancing steadily, until he was ordered to turn back and cover the retreat of the rest of the division. When he had executed this movement, he found that the troops had broken out into a mutiny, which Goguet had been unable to quell, and that a soldier had shot the general. The whole division was disorganised, and the troops showed a disposition to sympathise with the mutineers.

Bernadotte assumed command, and having formed the troops in order of battle, delivered an harangue, in which he pointed out the disastrous consequences of such insubordination: how advantageous it was to the enemy, and how dishonourable to the French troops. So effective was the speech that the danger-point shifted, and some of his listeners were on the point of summarily executing those, whom they suspected of being responsible for the death of the general, if Bernadotte had not intervened to prevent what might have been an act of indiscriminate violence. He took care afterwards to have the guilty party made amenable to justice.[a]

Another scene of the same kind occurred during this short campaign. Bernadotte's men were giving way; and an impassioned gasconade failed to rally them. Tearing off his epaulettes, Bernadotte threw them on the ground before his men, and said, "If you dishonour yourselves by flight, I refuse to remain your colonel." Some soldiers left the ranks, picked up the epaulettes, pressed them into the hand of the colonel, and the situation was saved.[a]

Such incidents serve to remind us that the Revolutionary army partook of the nature of a military mob, and, like a mob, was liable to be carried away by gusts of panic or of passion. Where

[a] Lafosse, 55–60; Sarrans, 7.

Bernadotte surpassed his contemporaries was in his peculiar power of "wielding at will that fierce democratie." When ominous signs of scare or of mutiny were observed, he never proved unequal to the emergency. A torrent of well-directed Gascon eloquence was usually sufficient. If words were unavailing, a dramatic act, calculated to strike the imagination of his men, was conceived and carried out. When both words and dramatic acts failed to restore order, he did not hesitate to draw his sword, which a general had the right to use against a mutineer. He has been sometimes referred to, in the exaggerated language of that age, as the "Jupiter Stator des mutins"; and hostile critics, who have called in question his military talents, have admitted that he had few, if any, equals as an "entraîneur des hommes."[a] His soldiers are said to have called him "Le dieu des armées."[b](17)

While Bernadotte was commanding the 71st half-brigade on the Belgian frontier, the Terror had in the capital been strengthening its sanguinary supremacy; and when Danton had been struck down, Robespierre, St. Just, and their faction, became the masters of France.

[a] *e.g.* "Il savait mieux entraîner les troupes que les faire manœuvrer" (H. Primbault, *La Revue Générale*, April 1902).

[b] Pingaud, p. 5. See note (17) in Appendix.

CHAPTER XIV

KLÉBER, MARCEAU, AND BERNADOTTE

APRIL–MAY 1794

"Kléber le dieu Mars en uniforme."—BONAPARTE.

"Rien est beau comme Kléber, un jour de bataille."—BONAPARTE.

"*Nul Général n'a été plus poétisé, et n'a plus merité que Marceau.*"—BONNAL DE GANGES, iv. 367.

"Marceau shared with Hoche the reputation of being not only a commander of brilliant audacity, but a man of honourable and generous character."—*Cambridge Modern History*, vol. viii. p. 197.

AT the end of April 1794, the part of the right wing, of the army of the North, in which Bernadotte was serving, was ordered to unite with the army of the Ardennes, which was operating on the banks of the river Sambre, in the district which lies near the confluence of the rivers Sambre and Meuse. The two corps joined forces, but did not coalesce, retaining their separate organisations, and their separate commanders,[a] with the result that they were crippled by divided counsels and by want of concentration.

A new turn was given to the campaign, and a new interest was introduced into Bernadotte's life, when two generals of exceptional merit were sent from the civil war in the Vendée to the Belgian frontier. These were Kléber and Marceau, both magnetic men, whose presence quickly braced the slackened energies, and invigorated the drooping spirits, of the army of Ardennes.

[a] Generals Des-Jardins and Charbonier.

GENERAL KLÉBER.
"The god Mars in uniform."
After the portrait by Ansiaux.

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Kléber[a] belonged to the professional class, which the military system of the old régime hurt so severely. Having no chance of promotion in the service of his own Sovereign, he drifted into the Austrian army, in which he held a commission for several years. Having retired to his native province of Alsace, he was, after the outbreak of the Revolution, elected colonel of a volunteer regiment, and distinguished himself in the defence of Mainz during and after Custine's second campaign. After the fall of Mainz, he was arrested, and narrowly escaped the guillotine. In recognition of his services at Mainz he was released; and was sent to the command of an army in the Vendée. Kléber was cast by nature for the rôle of a military hero; and he looked the part. Napoleon called him "the god Mars in uniform," and declared that there was no grander sight than Kléber on the day of battle.[a]

Marceau, like Bernadotte, came of a legal family, enlisted at sixteen, and was a sergeant at the outbreak of the Revolution. He retired, and subsequently re-entered the army. His was a singularly attractive personality. His portrait shows an hussar of the Revolution with a face like Robert Louis Stevenson.[b] His brief career made a romance of war, in which there were episodes which read like pages from *Woodstock* or *Quentin Durward*. His chivalrous effort to save the life of a Vendean prisoner, Angélique de Mesliers; his engagement to the Royalist, Agatha de Chateau-Giron, which ran the proverbial course of true love; and his tender regard for his sister Emira, render his life a sympathetic study, and confirm the judgment of a work of high authority, placed at the head of this chapter, that "Marceau shared with Hoche

[a] *Corr. de N.* xxxii. 387, Automarchi, ii. 65.

[b] See portrait, p. 166 *infra*.

the reputation of being not only a commander of brilliant audacity, but a man of honourable and generous character."

There was a wide difference of age and temperament between Kléber and Marceau, which for a time kept them apart. A good understanding sprang up in the storm and stress of a critical battle, when Kléber's admiration for Marceau's courage and coolness found expression in a spontaneous grasp of the hand, and led to a friendship of which Camille Pelletan has written: "I see nothing so grand as the friendship of Kléber and Marceau, which perhaps saved France by stemming the Vendean insurrection." [a]

Kléber and Marceau had no taste for civil war, and were glad to obtain a transfer from the Vendée to the army of Ardennes. Bernadotte quickly formed a friendship with them, and especially with Kléber, whom he had met in Custine's campaign. They resembled each other in their independence of character, and in their power of attracting and dominating their officers and men. Kléber came as a staff officer, but was soon appointed to the command of a division, the vanguard of which he entrusted to Bernadotte.

Bernadotte's peculiar power of managing mutinous troops is said to have enabled him to serve Marceau in an emergency. Marceau, in arresting some mutineers, was resisted, and was in danger of being overpowered. In an instant Colonel Bernadotte was among them, with drawn sword and a torrent of apt declamation. Kléber arrived on the scene, but, seeing Bernadotte in the middle of the mêlée, pulled up and exclaimed, "Let us leave him alone; we might spoil everything by interfering." Kléber and his companions stood by and looked on, while Bernadotte

[a] Pelletan, xxiv.

quickly succeeded in winning the majority of the military mob to the side of order.[a]

Bernadotte's relations with Kléber and Marceau, so long as they served together, were those of comradeship, which ripened into a warm friendship. There has been a disposition in some quarters to ignore and to deny an intimacy, which, if there is anything in the maxim, "noscitur a sociis," throws a favourable light upon this stage of Bernadotte's life. But Kléber's correspondence and Marceau's biography, written by his brother-in-law, Marceau-Sargent, testify to the ties of sympathy and good understanding, which united them to Bernadotte.

If Kléber and Marceau had lived to see Napoleon Emperor, he must have made them Marshals, and he might have raised them far higher. But Marceau was destined to fall in the German campaign of 1796; and in 1800 an Egyptian assassin was to give Kléber his summons to join the "innumerable caravan." A paler, but a purer, light attaches to the memory of those who, like Kléber and Marceau, died before the period, when honours and rewards were showered upon all soldiers of their calibre. As compared with Bernadotte, their candles were extinguished early, while his burnt to the socket. Yet, in all his long career, he achieved few things, of which it could be more unjust to rob him, than the title of having been, in his early campaigns, the tried and trusted friend of Kléber and of Marceau.[b]

[a] Lafosse, 64; Sarrans, 8.

[b] Biographies of Kléber have been written by Ernouf, Pajol, Reaulx, and Liebert d'Hericourt, and of Marceau by Parfait, Hippolyte Maze, T. C. Johnson, and Marceau-Sargent, the brother-in-law of the general.

CHAPTER XV

BERNADOTTE AND ST. JUST—BERNADOTTE REFUSES PROMOTION TO THE RANK OF GENERAL WHICH WAS OFFERED TO HIM BY ST. JUST

MAY–JUNE 1794

"Young St. Just . . . more like a student than a senator . . . a youth of slight stature, with mild, mellow voice, enthusiast olive complexion, and long black hair."—CARLYLE.

"Aux défaites des armées, la Convention opposait la Terreur. Les Dieux avaient soif."—ANATOLE FRANCE.

"Tous s'inclinaient devant ces terribles répresentants, qui tuaient sans pitié, qui destituaient sans raison, mais qui personifiaient . . . le souverain pouvoir de la nation."—GAY DE VERNON.

THE campaign on the Belgian frontier in April, May, and June 1794, brought Bernadotte into direct relations with one of the strangest aspects of the Revolution, the death-dealing despotism of the Representatives of the People, who were officially attached to the armies. In order to realise the extent of their power, it is necessary to understand its source. They were, in 1794, no mere agents of the Government. They were delegates of the Convention, endowed with a large share of the sovereign power of that omnipotent assembly. They carried to the armies a system of espionage and of terror. The justification of their employment was the National Peril. They were taskmasters and spies. Masséna acknowledged that they gained victories; for they made the generals run risks, which prudence often forbade, but success as often rewarded.[a] An officer who saw a great deal of them has written, in a passage placed at the head of this chapter: "Everyone bowed before the

[a] Bonnal de Ganges, i. 38.

DESIRÉE CLARY.
Who married General Bernadotte, August 17, 1798, and became Queen of Sweden.
After the portrait by Gerard.

To face page 338.

terrible Representatives who slew without pity, deprived men of their rank without cause, but who personified . . . the sovereign power of the nation."[a] When the executive power of the National Convention became concentrated in the Committee of Public Safety, the power of the Representatives of the People became more direct and indisputable.

In April, Bernadotte had a narrow escape of following Custine and Houchard to the scaffold. It is said that the strict discipline, which he maintained, was represented, according to the Revolutionary jargon of 1794, as a "despotic interference with the liberty" of his Republican subordinates. At all events, the Representatives of the People visited his quarters, and offered criticisms, to which he replied that, in view of the anxiety attaching to the position of a commanding officer, he was ready to return to the ranks and shoulder his musket, if they wished to find another colonel to lead his troops.[b]

Soon afterwards, an order for his arrest arrived from Paris. The Representative of the People postponed his arrest, as the army was on the eve of a critical engagement; but he instructed a police agent to watch him throughout the day. It was the day, in April, upon which, as already mentioned, he saved a rout and rallied his troops by tearing off his epaulettes and appealing successfully to a sense of shame. That was one incident in a long day's fighting. In the evening the agent was obliged to report that he had been a witness of most brilliant valour and skill on the part of the officer, whom he had been instructed to watch, with the result that the order for his arrest was cancelled.[b]

[a] Gay de Vernon, *Vie de Gouvin St. Cyr*, 24, 25.

[b] Lafosse, 61, 62.

Other generals on the northern frontier were less fortunate than Bernadotte. Three gallant Irishmen —Generals O'Meara, O'Moran, and Kilmaine—were arrested during these months of military terror. Their foreign extraction, and their reputed loyalty to their faith and to the late king, helped to expose them to unfounded suspicions. O'Moran was guillotined in March. O'Meara survived a long imprisonment, and was afterwards ennobled by Napoleon when emperor. Kilmaine was suspended and narrowly escaped execution, but lived to do good service as a cavalry leader.

Of the Representatives of the People with the armies, the most powerful was St. Just.[a] He was Robespierre's pen and mouthpiece. A strange phenomenon was the spectacle of a hundred thousand armed men under the absolute sway of this young civilian, whom Carlyle has portrayed as " more like a student than a senator . . . a youth of slight stature, with mild, mellow voice, enthusiast olive complexion, and long black hair." Behind him stalked, like a grim spectre, the whole demoniac force of the Revolution, concentrated in the Committee of Public Safety ; and here lay the secret of his mysterious authority.

Young and handsome, with powdered hair and large blue eyes, " portant sa tête comme un Saint Sacrament," to quote Camille Desmoulins's satirical phrase, St. Just was the most picturesque and pitiless of the leaders of the Reign of Terror. He had brought to the guillotine a long procession of his enemies; and when he undertook a mission to the armies, it took the form of a Revolutionary assize.[b]

Two occasions are recorded, upon which St. Just

[a] *Orateurs de la Révolution*, ii. 449, 482.

[b] Madelin, 342 ; Bonnal de Ganges, i. 23, 316.

and Bernadotte met. They must have been in the months of May or June, in the course of which St. Just paid two visits to the army on the Belgian frontier.

On one of these occasions Bernadotte surprised St. Just by the ease with which he kept unruly men in order. Kléber and Marceau were approached by a deputation of twelve sergeants, complaining of discomforts, and asking to be quartered in some neighbouring villages, which offered better attractions. St. Just was present. Kléber called Bernadotte from another room and said to him, "Teach your grenadiers that a camp is not a club." The sergeants, undismayed, repeated their complaints to Bernadotte, and pointed out on a map the villages, which they wished to occupy. Bernadotte's answer was to fall upon them with the flat of his sword, and to conduct them back to their camp, where their return from their fruitless mission was greeted with banter and ridicule.[a]

On another day Kléber was engaged in an assault upon an Austrian position, which ended successfully. Bernadotte led the vanguard, and the enemy was forced to retire. St. Just and Duquesnoy, the two Representatives of the People with the army, had sheltered, during the fight, in a neighbouring inn. When the day was over, they rejoined the troops, and thanked Kléber in the name of the Convention. Kléber presented Bernadotte to them as having contributed to the success of the attack by his coolness and presence of mind. St. Just and his colleague condescended to honour the Gascon colonel with a fraternal embrace, and proposed to exercise their power of appointing him to the rank of general.[a]

Bernadotte refused this offer of promotion, saying

[a] Sarrazin, *Mémoires*, 29, 30; ib. *Guerres civiles*, 301.

that he had no experience of the command of armies, or of the movement of large bodies of troops, and begged the Representatives of the People to leave him in the rank of colonel. It is clear that at this period of his life, Bernadotte felt himself at home in the position of a regimental commander, and believed that he had reached the limit of his capacity, of his usefulness, and of his ambition. Although in later years he gained more self-confidence, and enlarged the horizon of his hopes, it was characteristic of him to shrink from any post, which he doubted his ability to fill with credit and success, and his subsequent career will offer several examples of similar refusals of high employment.[a]

Of Bernadotte's refusal of the rank of general, and of his motives for refusal, we have the following account from Kléber's staff officer, General Sarrazin,[b](18) written many years afterwards, when Bernadotte became Prince of Sweden :—

"About the end of May 1794, the French army, called of Ardennes, was encamped by the river Sambre . . . where was established the headquarters of General Kléber. General Bernadotte, now Prince Regent of Sweden, and then a colonel, commanded the vanguard of the army. Having called on General Kléber for the service of his troops, he was informed that the army was to execute a movement. 'Go to the staff officer,' said Kléber to Bernadotte, 'ask Sarrazin to deliver you the order for your column, and bring it to me that I may sign it.' I then saw Bernadotte for the first time. His Gascon accent convinced me that he was my countryman, and his handsome appearance inspired me with the hope of forming a friendship with him. It may be readily supposed that our acquaintance was quickly settled. We promised to visit each other as often as possible. As soon as he had acquainted me with the intentions of Kléber, I wrote the

[a] See pp. 265 and 357 *infra*.

[b] See note on General Sarrazin in App. Note (18).

order, which was dispatched very soon, without disturbing our conversation. He brought it to Kléber, who signed it immediately without perusing it. Bernadotte returned to the office with such a look of astonishment that I feared that Kléber had found some fault with the order. I begged him to explain the matter. He confessed that he was stupefied that Kléber should sign so confidently. He asked my name and age, and begged me to explain how it was possible that, although so young, I could be able to put in motion a great army. Not wishing to impose upon him, I showed him the Flemish campaign of the Marshal de Luxemburg by the Chevalier de Beaurain, the excellent maps of Ferrari, and the atlas of the principal strong town of the Low Countries."[a]

Sarrazin then refers to the offer of promotion made to him by St. Just, and proceeds :—

"Bernadotte refused the promotion, saying that he had not the talents necessary for so high a rank, and he begged the Representatives of the People to leave him in his rank of colonel, in which he enjoyed the confidence of officers and men. Kléber's persuasion failed to shake his resolution. I was, however, more successful on a subsequent occasion. With a tone rather of regret, he said to me that he had refused the rank of general, because he thought himself not learned enough to fulfil the duties of that situation. I laughed heartily at his modesty, so seldom practised by the Gascons, and I assured him that, should he accept, he would be a great deal superior to several generals, whom I mentioned, and that he would have reason to regret his refusal, when he found himself compelled to carry out their ill-devised orders, which would be equally injurious to his own reputation and to the service of the Republic. Having slept over my advice, he came to me next day and said, 'Since such is your opinion, should I be offered again, I shall accept.' I communicated this avowal to Kléber."[a]

[a] Sarrazin, *Mémoires*, 28–30; *Guerres civiles*, 302; *Memorial* (*Supplement*), 11, 12. These three passages from Sarrazin's writings are embodied in the above extracts.

In another place the same officer gives the following description of Bernadotte at this period :—

"Gifted by nature with a handsome bearing and a commanding aspect, he was beloved by his troops, because he knew all the details of his duties as commander, and was successful in looking after the well-being of his subordinates. His kindness was not more marked than his firmness in preserving discipline."

While these events were happening on the Belgian frontier, the Terror was assuming a more intense and violent form in the capital. The only connection which soldiers like Kléber, Marceau, and Bernadotte had with the Terror was that they, in turn, narrowly escaped becoming its victims. The attitude of the generals of the Revolution towards its horrors was thus expressed by General MacDonald, when he had become a marshal and duke: "I detest the men and the crimes of the Revolution. The army took no part in them. It never looked behind, but always ahead at the enemy, and deplored the excesses that were being committed." In the same spirit young Marbot wrote that his father continued to serve the Revolutionary Government, "because he held that to repel the enemy from French soil was, under all the circumstances, an obligation of honour, and in no way pledged a soldier to approve of the atrocities committed by the Convention in its internal administration."[a] Kléber, Marceau, and Bernadotte were as free as MacDonald and Marbot were from any responsibility for the crimes which were being committed in France while they were far away on active service.

[a] Marbot, i. 15, 16.

CHAPTER XVI

The Campaign on the Sambre in May and June 1794[a]

MAY 10–JUNE 16, 1794

"The Republic requires a victory to-morrow. You may choose between a siege or a battle."—*St. Just at the Council of War, 25th May* 1794.

"By the help of General Duhesme and Colonel Bernadotte, everything was so well prepared that the enemy was checked at Fontaine l'Evéque . . . and I can say, in praise of both commanders and soldiers, that better discipline in moving and marching was never seen. Neither shot nor shell nor the enemy's marked superiority in numbers caused a single man to leave the ranks."—*General Marceau's report, dated 5th June, on the battle of the 3rd June* 1794.

Seldom has a more strenuous series of engagements been fought than in the brief campaign on the river Sambre, in which Kléber, Marceau, and Bernadotte took part in May and June 1794. General Jourdan was known to be conducting to their relief upwards of 40,000 men from the army of the Moselle; and it would have been more prudent for the French to remain on the defensive until his expected arrival. But St. Just decided otherwise; and under the crack of his relentless whip, the army engaged in a series of desperate and hopeless attacks upon the Austrian positions. Some incidents of these five weeks' fighting have been related in the preceding chapters. It remains to sketch the outline of these fruitless operations, Four times during this brief period the army crossed the Sambre; and four times they were driven back with heavy losses. On each occasion Colonel Bernadotte crossed the river with the vanguard, and recrossed it with the rear-guard, covering the retreat.

[a] *Les operations militaires sur le Sambre*, par Dupuis.

The first crossing was on 10th May. After holding their position for two days, the French were attacked and forced to retire. After a week's rest, they crossed the Sambre for the second time on the 20th May, and again held their position for a few days. But the Austrians, taking advantage of Kléber's temporary absence on a foraging expedition, attacked and routed them, inflicting a loss of 4000 men. The defeated army might have been annihilated, if Kléber had not returned in time to protect the retiring movement. In the course of this operation, finding it necessary to dislodge an Austrian battery from a commanding position, Kléber sent Bernadotte along the Sambre in command of a brigade to turn the enemy's right, while three battalions attacked in front. Jomini tells us that the success of the manœuvre, hazardous although it appeared to be, left nothing to be desired.[a] The Austrians were dislodged with the loss of two guns, and the retreat of the French was effectually covered.

On the night of the 25th May, a council of war was held, at which all the generals, including Kléber, were of opinion that the army should remain on the defensive until reinforced by General Jourdan. But St. Just rejected their unanimous advice, declaring, "The Republic requires a victory to-morrow. You may choose between a siege or a battle."

Accordingly, the Sambre was again crossed on the the 26th, with the result that the army was repulsed for the third time. St. Just multiplied his threats, and ordered a fourth attack.

On the 29th May, the French crossed the Sambre for the fourth time; but the Austrians, having received reinforcements, attacked them at Péchant, on 3rd June, and drove them back across the Sambre to

[a] Jomini, v. 69, 70.

their former positions. In this engagement, Bernadotte served in the left wing, which was commanded by General Marceau. It appears, from Marceau's report, dated 5th June,[a] an extract from which is placed at the head of this chapter, that it was largely due to the skill and coolness of Colonel Bernadotte, that the retreat was covered.

On their return from this defeat, the beaten army met General Jourdan with Generals Lefèbvre and Championnet, and 40,000 men. The whole aspect of affairs was changed; but the tide of victory was not turned, until three weeks had been spent in fighting and preparation.

Jourdan, having been invested with the supreme command, crossed the Sambre on 12th June, and resumed the investment of Charleroi. He was attacked on the 16th, and repulsed in an engagement which was suspended for some hours by a heavy fog, and on that account was called "l'affaire de brouillard," or the "Affair of the Mist." In this engagement Colonel Bernadotte distinguished himself, first by recapturing the position of Trasignies at the point of the bayonet; then by contributing to the turning of the enemy's position by a flank movement; and, finally, by helping to cover the retreat of the army across the Sambre.[b] Kléber in his report wrote that "Bernadotte and his half-brigade have strengthened the opinion which I had already formed of their courage and bravery."[a]

After the "Affair of the Mist," St. Just ordered a number of officers, whom he held responsible for the reverse, to be arrested and tried by court martial. Jourdan only succeeded in saving them by virtually making himself their hostage. He promised a speedy victory, and staked their lives, and perhaps his own, upon the performance of his bond.

[a] Dupuis, 207–209, 501–503, 556. [b] Jomini, v. 106.

CHAPTER XVII

The Battle of Fleurus

June 26, 1794

"Bernadotte Général de brigade (nommé à titre provisionaire par les representants du peuple à l'armée de Sambre et Meuse), 29 Juin 1894."—*Extract from Archives of the Ministry of War.*

"Pour traits de bravoure et actions d'éclat."—*Bernadotte's brevet as General of Brigade.*

On 18th June, General Jourdan, under the grim shadow of St. Just's threats, again crossed the river Sambre, in the teeth of severe resistance, and laid siege to the fortress of Charleroi, which held the key to Belgium. His army formed a semicircle round Charleroi, with two points of the semicircle resting on the river Sambre. The fortress was, in this way, completely surrounded by the army and by the river. For several days the siege was pressed with vigour,[a] until on 25th June the batteries of the garrison were silenced, and the place capitulated. The garrison had hardly filed out, when the sound of distant cannon was heard, which heralded the arrival of the Duke of Coburg with a relieving army of 70,000 Austrians. Coburg, being unaware of the capitulation, gave battle on the following day, 26th June, and attacked the French semicircle all along the line, with the intention of raising the siege.

The plain of Fleurus, one of the most important of the disputed positions, gave its name to the battle, which commenced at daybreak on 26th June, and was maintained throughout the day. The losses in killed

[a] Dupuis, 571–580.

and wounded were almost evenly divided : and, at the close of the day's fighting, the result was by no means decisive. But the Austrian general, when he ascertained that Charleroi had capitulated, retired, leaving the victory to the French.

Some writers have described the battle as "drawn"; but a battle must be judged by its results; and, as this one was immediately followed by the retreat of the Austrians towards the Rhine, and by the conquest of Belgium, it had for France all the significance of a striking victory.

All accounts of the fighting agree in attributing to Colonel Bernadotte an important share in the day's work. The French left wing included the division of General Kléber; and Bernadotte commanded Kléber's vanguard. They were opposed by the Prince of Orange and General Latour, who were in command of the Austrian right wing. The object of the Austrian generals was to seize the woods of Monceaux (or Courcelle). These woods afforded a favourable position for attacking the heights of Marchiennes au Pont, which commanded Charleroi. After some indecisive fighting, the Austrians succeeded in occupying the woods, and in directing a heavy fire upon the heights, where the French were finding it difficult to hold their ground.

Kléber saved the situation by creating a diversion. He strengthened the artillery on the heights, and despatched Colonel Bernadotte to attack the village of Baymont, which was a position on the Austrian flank.[a] The Austrians wavered. Kléber saw his opportunity, and ordered Bernadotte to attack them on the right, while he himself engaged them on the left. Bernadotte carried out the order with success. He

[a] Jomini, v. 116, 124; *Victoires, Conquêtes*, iii. 54, 55.

penetrated, and drove the Austrians out of the woods, and pursued them to their camp, taking many prisoners.

The details of this operation are described by Bernadotte in his written report to Kléber.[a] It appears that he originally planned a flank attack with four companies of his first battalion, and a frontal attack with his second battalion and his cavalry, while the rest of his men were to form a reserve. He was forced to change this plan, owing to news of the approach, on the right, of 3000 Dutch infantry and four squadrons of cavalry. He then detached the four companies of the first battalion to defend his right from this formidable danger, called up his small reserve to carry out the flank attack, and himself led the assault on the front of the enemy's position. Twice his cavalry were repulsed, but the third charge was successful, and carried the woods.

Kléber was now left master of this part of the field, and was thus enabled to reinforce the centre, where Lefèbvre and Championnet, in a day of varying fortunes, succeeded in holding their own, and to help Marceau, who, with the right wing of the French army, offered a desperate resistance to the Austrian left.

This is the first occasion upon which Bernadotte emerges from the crowd of undistinguished combatants, and takes an acknowledged place among the principal actors in a battle-scene. The chief honours of this battle are probably due to General Lefèbvre for his resolute defence of the centre position, but all the accounts of the battle accord to Bernadotte's attack on Baymont and the woods of Monceaux a place among the decisive incidents of the day. He is described by spectators as advancing sword in hand at

[a] Dupuis, 340, 341.

the head of his troops, charging the enemy's position, retaking lost ground, clearing and carrying the woods, and pursuing the enemy to their camp. Of the 3000 prisoners taken during the day, the greater number surrendered to Bernadotte. Kléber, who, in his report, described himself as "voyant dans la plaine Bernadotte attaquer avec sa zèle et son valeur habituels,"[a] named him a general of brigade on the field of battle. The military archives record that, three days afterwards, on the 29th June, he was provisionally appointed to that rank by the Representative of the People. In the brevet of promotion which reached him soon afterwards, it was stated that he had received the rank of general of brigade "pour traits de bravoure et actions d'éclat."[b]

It was after the battle of Fleurus that the National Convention, by a decree of 29th June, gave the name of "The Army of Sambre and Meuse" to the victorious army of Fleurus.[c](19)

The army of Sambre and Meuse was so called, because its first operations took place in the district, which lies near the confluence of the rivers Sambre and Meuse; and it preserved this distinctive title until the year 1799, although after 1794 it was employed far away from the rivers, from which its name was originally taken. Frenchmen speak and write of the army of Sambre and Meuse with an admiration only less than that, which they bestow upon the army of Italy, or upon the grand army of Napoleon. This is not surprising. It was the army which first turned the tide of victory for the new Republic; saved the northern frontier and the capital from invasion; broke up the alliance of so many European nations; and

[a] Dupuis, 339, 340. [b] Sarrans, 9 n.

[c] *Moniteur*, 30th June 1794, and see App. Note (19).

preserved the integrity of France. The saying that "all the virtues had fled to the army," was in a special degree applicable to the army of Sambre and Meuse. Among its officers were many patriotic citizens, who turned their back upon the horrors and excesses of the Revolution, and took refuge in the army as the only place in which they could honourably serve their country.[a] As compared with other branches of the service, the army of Sambre and Meuse was animated by an enthusiasm less red and relentless, and more coloured by all that was spiritual and idealistic in the Republican sentiment of the day. The success of its operations was due to the ability and efficiency of a brilliant group of generals, who, like Bernadotte, won their position by merit displayed upon the field of battle.

Before we pass to the campaign in Belgium, which was the sequel to Fleurus, let us follow St. Just and the Terror to their end. Although St. Just may be said to have contributed, by his vigorous insistence, to the victory of Fleurus, that victory was one of the causes, which indirectly led to his ruin and to that of Robespierre. The main justification of the Terror in the public mind was the national danger. While foreign armies menaced the frontiers with invasion, and Paris itself with the perils of a siege, it was possible for the public to shut its eyes to the horrors, which were being enacted in the capital, and to accept the Terrorist doctrine that it was necessary to strike the enemies of the State at home as well as abroad. But when the Allies were in retreat, and the national danger was past, the activity of the Revolutionary Tribunal came to be regarded as an anachronism, and the suppressed indignation and fear, which had lurked in the public mind, were allowed to find some ex-

[a] Cf. *Bonaparte et Hoche*, 311.

THE BATTLE OF FLEURUS (JUNE 1794).
General Jourdan on horseback; Generals Kléber, Marceau, and Lefèbvre in the background.
After the painting by Mauzaisse in the Versailles Gallery.

To face page 96.

pression. The general sense of public security, which followed the battle of Fleurus, presented a contrast to the appalling danger-cloud which overhung the individual life of every citizen. This change in public opinion strengthened the hands of Robespierre's enemies in the Convention. In this way the success of the army on the Sambre was one of the circumstances leading up to the fall of Robespierre and St. Just. On the 9th Thermidor (27th July), just one month after the battle of Fleurus, their despotism was overthrown; and on the following day, St. Just, who in May and June held in the hollow of his hand the lives of a hundred thousand men, himself met his death by the guillotine, and became one of that "bruised, begrimed band," who, to quote Lord Morley's vivid words, "walked the *via dolorosa* of the Revolution on the 10th Thermidor."

PART IV

THE ARMY OF SAMBRE AND MEUSE

JULY 1794–DECEMBER 1796

"The family of Sambre and Meuse."—KLÉBER.

PART IV

THE ARMY OF SAMBRE AND MEUSE
JULY 1794—DECEMBER 1796

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CHAPTER XVIII

The Conquest of Belgium

JULY–OCTOBER 1794

"Je ne puis trop me louer du Général Bernadotte; toujours sous le feu le plus vif, il dirigeait ses dispositions avec un sang-froid héroique; son courage infatigable et son intrepidité ont décidé du sort de la bataille."—*Kléber's despatch after the battle of the Roer, 3rd October* 1794.

The victory of Fleurus, followed by the retreat of the Austrians, threw open the door to the Netherlands. The Republican Army poured over the frontier, and dispersed itself in a scattered pursuit. Kléber, with Bernadotte in the van, made for Mons, the capital of the province of Hainault, carried the heights of Havré, which commanded that place, and drove the Austrians out of the city. Having overrun Hainault, they turned northwards, and advanced upon Brussels. It is interesting to note that, in the course of these operations, on the 6th July, an engagement was fought on the field of Waterloo,[a] where, twenty-one years afterwards, the last scene of the dramatic epoch, which was now opening, was to be enacted. This was Bernadotte's only chance of seeing La Belle Alliance, La Haye Sainte, Hougoumont, and Mt. St. Jean, for he was not destined to fight at Waterloo in 1815.

On the 10th July, just a fortnight after the battle of Fleurus, Brussels was occupied; and it was resolved to complete the conquest of Belgium. This task was allotted to the army of Sambre and Meuse. Kléber was appointed to be the commander of the left wing, and Bernadotte, who was already his senior

[a] Jomini, v. 132.

brigadier, became leader of his vanguard. After two engagements fought at Louvain and Tirlemont, the Austrians were driven out of Brabant, and, before the end of July, found themselves compelled to retire behind the line of the river Meuse.[a]

When the Austrians had been driven beyond the Meuse, the French army halted, while the greater part of August was occupied in recovering the fortresses on French territory, which had remained in the hands of the enemy. When this had been accomplished, the campaign was resumed. Kléber took up a position upon the high lands commanding Maestricht; and the heights of Bilsen became the headquarters of Bernadotte, who was now in touch both with the retreating enemy and with the garrison of Maestricht. Several desperate engagements ensued, of which the most important was the battle of the Ourthe, fought *à l'outrance* on the 17th.

Bernadotte's description of his share in the battle of the Ourthe is contained in the following letter, expressed in the fierce jargon of the Revolutionary wars, with a touch of Gascon imagery, which came naturally to the writer, who, in despatching Ney, during this campaign, in pursuit of the enemy, gave him the following order: "Let them fall before you like corn before the reaper's sickle."

"To General Kléber,
commanding the left wing.

Equality. *Liberty.*

Bilsen, the 1st of the Sansculottides,[b]
9 o'clock in the evening.

"I have just returned, my dear General. I was obliged to remain in action longer than you prescribed,

[a] *Victoires, Conquêtes*, iii. 72–91, 162–172.

[b] 17th September 1794.

because the enemy, when I was on the point of retiring, made a forward movement. I collected my cavalry, and charging the enemy, put them to flight. The day went well for us. Although the columns of Bounamir could not do all that you intended, I have nevertheless carried out your object. The villages of Welversert and Lonaken and the redoubts which defended them were carried with the rapidity of lightning. The cavalry behaved with gallantry. They were attacked on the left flank, but held their ground firmly, and twice repulsed the enemy. I drove the enemy out of Welversert and massacred pitilessly a company of chasseurs which obstinately held its ground there. The 1st battalion of the 71st had to deal with them, and would take no prisoners. The light horse of Carakin lost heavily. I had to encounter a large column which had made a sortie from Maestricht. I shall send you a full report to-morrow. I have lost several men, including the adjutant-major of the 71st. I am satisfied with the artillery, which, although surrounded by the enemy, held its ground.—Health, esteem, and friendship.

"J. B. BERNADOTTE."[a](24)

Jourdan now abandoned his plan of an immediate siege of Maestricht, and summoned Kléber and Bernadotte from the investment of that place to the banks of the river Roer, where a battle was expected. Before the end of September, Bernadotte, commanding Kléber's vanguard, and ably seconded by Ney, fought his way from Maestricht to the Roer. Between Bernadotte and Ney a friendship sprang up, during this campaign, which lasted as long as they remained companions in arms; and a time came, when some of Ney's family found a safe retreat in Bernadotte's kingdom of Sweden.

In the course of this march Bernadotte received the following letter from Kléber:—

[a] See App. Note (24 A).

" *9th Vendémiaire, An III.*
(*30th September* 1794).

" On receipt of this letter, my dear comrade, you will direct Adjutant-General Ney . . . to ascertain the width of the Roer, and whether it is fordable, and, if so, at what point. . . . In any event, you will requisition all procurable carpenters, and collect . . . materials for throwing a bridge over that river. Do not stand on ceremony, my dear comrade. Use, if necessary, the flooring of the houses. If you could seize Heinsberg to-day, it would be a good step forward, and a fine vanguard stroke. . . . Health and brotherhood.

" KLÉBER."[a]

So well were these instructions carried out that in the evening Kléber was able to write to Bernadotte: " Bravo, my dear comrade! That was a surprise attack, which will delight the general-in-chief. I shall take the first opportunity of reporting it to him."[a]

On 2nd October was fought the battle which decided the issue of this campaign. The Austrian centre was stationed at Aldenhoven, behind the Roer, and the immediate effect of the battle was the taking of Juliers. It has been variously referred to in military and historical books as the battle " of Aldenhoven," or " of Juliers," or " of the Roer."

Kléber commanded the left wing, Bernadotte leading Kléber's vanguard. Bernadotte and his vanguard occupied the banks of the Roer, under a heavy fire from the enemy, who were favourably posted on the opposite side. A bridge had been made, but turned out to be too short to span the river. Bernadotte called on his troops to jump into the water, exclaiming, " The bravest to the front, as an example to the others! " Led by their officers, among whom was Lieutenant, afterwards Marshal, Gerard, the men

[a] Lafosse, 69, 70.

of the 71st Regiment plunged into the stream. Some were killed and some drowned, but, before the day was over, they established a sufficient force on the opposite bank, and held their ground until the army followed them next morning. They were rewarded by having "Aldenhoven" inscribed on the regimental standards, which were preserved by the corps for eighty-six years, until they were lost at the capitulation of Metz in October 1870. Of Bernadotte's conduct during this battle, Kléber wrote in his report: "I cannot sufficiently praise General Bernadotte. Always under a heavy fire, he directed the movements of his troops with heroic sang-froid. His courage and intrepidity decided the result of the battle."[a]

After the battle of the Roer, the French pursued the Austrians to Düsseldorf, Bernadotte commanding the vanguard, and Ney the vanguard of the vanguard. On 3rd October Bernadotte found in the village inn at Guerack, just evacuated by the Austrian commander-in-chief, a copy of a despatch describing the route of the Austrian supply train, the capture of which resulted from the following order, which he sent to Ney:—

"The general who commands an army, in which you are employed, is a fortunate man. I have that good luck, and I fully appreciate it. Continue to pursue and hussar the enemy, and I shall second you to the utmost of my means. . . .

"I must inform you, my dear friend, that there is something of great importance to be attempted. The honour of the attempt is reserved for you, and to you shall be attributed all the merit of its success. You must, if possible, obtain possession of the flour which Field-Marshal Werneck is sending, under an escort, along the heights on the other side of Vegong, whence it is to enter the high road, for the purpose of reaching

[a] *Kléber*, par Reaulx, 72.

Neuss and Düsseldorf. The undertaking will, perhaps, be hazardous—but no matter. . . .

"I am going to take a few hours' rest; I advise you to do the same, for I fancy we shall have no time for sleep to-morrow.

"BERNADOTTE.

"GUERACK, 12*th Vendémiaire*,
"*Year III.* (3*rd October* 1794)."[a]

On the 6th October the French army arrived before Düsseldorf. As the Rhine had been reached, and had been made a frontier river, General Jourdan sent Kléber and Bernadotte to resume the siege of Maestricht, which had become the essential object of French strategy. Meanwhile, the Representative of the People, with the army, sent to Paris, on 16th October, the following report:[b]—

"I wish specially to recommend for the rank of general of division the brave Bernadotte, recently promoted by Guyton and myself to be brigadier-general. It was he who commanded Kléber's vanguard on the Roer. He is an officer who is as efficient as he is courageous; and he is greatly beloved by his men. He has not yet received a patent of appointment.

"GILLET."

[a] *Ney*, par Bonnal, 34. [b] Hans Kloeber, 48, quoting Hardy.

CHAPTER XIX

THE SIEGE OF MAESTRICHT

OCTOBER–NOVEMBER 1794

"Be assured that courage does not suffice to ensure victory. Our reverses have proved that it cannot avail us without steady, just, and rigorous discipline."—*Extract from Bernadotte's order of the day at the siege of Maestricht, 21st October* 1794.

ON the 11th October, Kléber arrived before Maestricht, and took command of the besieging force. Bernadotte was entrusted with the attack on the suburb of Wyck, which, being separated by the river from the rest of the city, was a post calling for considerable independence of action. Under him was serving General Hardy, who has written an interesting diary of the siege.[a] As this was Bernadotte's first experience of the kind, he wisely gave a free hand to the officers of the Artillery and of the Engineer Corps in their respective departments. The following was his general order—a characteristic document, bringing Gascon fire to the aid of military discipline :—

"ARMY BEFORE MAESTRICHT. *Liberty. Equality.*

ATTACKING DIVISION OF WYCK.

HEADQUARTERS OF MANDENHOVEN,

The 30th Vendémiaire, 3rd Year (*21st Oct.* 1794).

"BERNADOTTE, GENERAL OF BRIGADE,

commanding provisionally the attacking division of Wyck,

"TO THE TROOPS UNDER HIS ORDERS."

"Your valour and courage forbid me to have any doubt of the speedy surrender of the place, the attack

[a] *Le Siège de Maestricht*, par Hardy; cf. *Victoires, Conquêtes*, vol. iii. pp. 203–215.

upon which is committed to your charge. Hired soldiers, under the influence of force and fear, have the audacity to insult you from their battlements. Your Republican pride is wounded by the contemplation of an enemy, whom your triumphant arms have not yet overthrown. The moment approaches when the ramparts, which oppose a barrier to your fierce attack, will crumble before your eyes.

"But be assured that courage does not suffice to ensure victory. Our reverses have proved that it cannot avail us without steady, just, and rigorous discipline. It is, above all, during a siege that austere discipline must be scrupulously observed. For I must warn you that the slightest murmur would be a crime against the Republic.

"I require of you to observe absolute silence in the trenches, trusting in your chiefs, who will share your labours and fatigues, and will by their example help you to accelerate the operations of the siege.

"J. B. BERNADOTTE."[a]

General Sarrazin gives an eye-witness's description of Bernadotte's conduct in the trenches.

"He, Bernadotte, every day, whatever might be the weather, visited the trenches, and encouraged the workmen. They entreated him to retire, observing to him that he ran very great risk, without any prospect of advantage. His answer was, 'that considering his soldiers as his children, it was his greatest pleasure to share in their dangers, and to witness their zeal in executing his orders.' This behaviour received a double recompense: first, by attaching more and more the officers and soldiers, who, whatever they may say, are always fond of seeing their generals at their head; and secondly, by inducing the workmen to hasten their work. They all responded with one voice: 'Let us be of good cheer, and work double tides, to shelter our brave general, who thus exposes himself as one of us.' I have seen Bernadotte

[a] The author possesses a copy of the original issue of this order; but, as it is to be found elsewhere, it has not been printed in the Appendix.

shedding tears of the sweetest sympathy in seeing himself thus beloved by his troops."[a]

General Hardy publishes the elaborate instructions which he received from Bernadotte, and remarks that such careful preparations deserved the success by which they were crowned.

Those who care to follow the digging of the trenches, with their zigzags and parallels and advance batteries, will find them all described in Hardy's diary. Suffice it to say that the work commenced upon 23rd October, and that all was ready for a general attack on the 2nd November. On that day Bernadotte announced to his troops that the batteries would begin to fire, and expressed the hope that they would be the first to strike the blow. The attack was successful, and the capitulation was signed on 4th November.

Kléber showed his appreciation of Bernadotte's services by conferring on him all the honours of which the occasion admitted. He was selected to receive the arms of the surrendered garrison. Bernadotte, in his order of the day, told his troops that, when the enemy marched out and laid down their arms, the French soldiers were to observe a proud and military bearing, and to receive the Austrians without moving a muscle of the face. They were not to leave their ranks or to communicate with the enemy, on pain of the severest punishment, and at the same time they were not to allow any word or look of insult to escape them, for they were to remember that if the Republican troops could inspire terror in a battle, they could be generous and chivalrous after a victory.

This was not the only mark of esteem which Bernadotte received. He was appointed governor of Maes-

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 11; ib. *Mémoires*, 37.

tricht with a garrison of 4000 men. By his strict discipline he enforced respect for the persons, property, and religion of the townspeople, until he was summoned away, to join the main body of the army, which was stationed along the banks of the Rhine.

During the siege of Maestricht effect was given to the recommendation of General Jourdan, and of the Representative of the People, by the appointment of Bernadotte to the rank of general of division. The year had been for him an *annus mirabilis*. In January he was a captain, in February he was lieutenant-colonel, in April he became colonel, in June general of brigade, in November general of division. He had distinguished himself on the Sambre, at Fleurus, at the battles of the Ourthe and of the Roer, and at the siege of Maestricht.

In the following year, 1795, a report was presented to the National Convention, on behalf of the Committee of Public Safety, by Dubois Crancé, giving a list of the generals of the Republic, with observations upon each of them. Among the generals of division of the army of Sambre and Meuse occurs the name of Bernardotte [*sic*], with the following observations :—

" Soldier in the 60th Regiment in 1780 ; has passed through all the ranks ; general of division the 1st Brumaire an 3 (22nd October 1794). A good officer, commended by the Representatives of the People, Richard, Merlin de Thionville, and Gillet, and by Jourdan."[a]

The conquest of Belgium, and the retreat of the Austrians after Fleurus, discouraged the Allies.

[a] *Tableau et Rapport*, etc., Dubois Crancé (Brit. Museum Library).

Prussia now turned her attention to Poland, and prepared to make peace with the French Republic. The spirit of England, as represented by the government of Pitt, remained unshaken, and found encouragement in a series of brilliant naval successes. So far as the Continent was concerned, Austria remained, for the time being, the only formidable enemy of the Republic; and as a result of the recent campaign, the theatre of war was shifted from the Netherlands to the Rhine.

CHAPTER XX

WITH THE ARMY OF SAMBRE AND MEUSE ON THE RHINE IN 1795

NOVEMBER 1794–AUGUST 1795

"You propose to send me reinforcements. I accept with pleasure, if at their head you will send me a man who is devoted to his duty, who understands my methods of operation, upon whom I can depend with absolute confidence, who is capable of transmitting to his troops the electric fire with which I would inspire him. . . . You know very well that it is of Bernadotte that I speak."—*Extract from General Kléber's letter to General Jourdan, dated 16th August 1795.*

WHILE General Jourdan had been annexing Belgium, General Pichegru had effected the conquest of Holland, which resulted in the establishment of the Batavian Republic on a footing of alliance with France. With a friendly government installed in Holland, it became no longer necessary to have a strong garrison in Maestricht. Accordingly, Bernadotte was ordered, early in 1795, to return to the army of Sambre and Meuse, which was stationed along the Rhine for a stretch of a hundred miles or more from Düsseldorf to Bingen.

"The Army of Sambre and Meuse" will now be found fighting for several years far away from the two rivers from which it derived its name. In order to understand how this came about, it is necessary to remember that the title of "Sambre and Meuse" was given by a decree of the National Convention to this army, in order to commemorate the victory of Fleurus and the other combats which were fought near the confluence of the rivers Sambre and Meuse, and were followed by the conquest of Belgium.[a]

[a] See p. 95 *supra*, and App. Note (19)

Just as a clan or sept is consolidated by the common possession of some territorial title, so the officers and men, who fought together under this special and inspiring appellation, became bound to each other "with hoops of steel." Jourdan its commander-in-chief; Kléber, Marceau, Lefèbvre, Bernadotte, Championnet, Colaud, and other divisional generals; Ney and Soult, and many a brave officer of lesser rank, spoke of the army as their "family," and of each other as its members. It would not be possible for the reader to understand the intensity of the *esprit de corps* which this army generated, and of the jealousies which it excited, without realising that it constituted a remarkable military unit, distinguished by a peculiar title of honour, which was conferred upon it by the nation in recognition of special and conspicuous services to the State.

An example of the spirit of clanship, which animated this army, is afforded in the case of Kléber, who was sent after the capture of Maestricht to command a wing of the army of the Rhine and Moselle, which was besieging Mainz. He wrote to the Government asking to be allowed to return to "the family" of Sambre and Meuse; and he assured General Jourdan in a letter of 7th June, that he would prefer to serve under him in a subordinate position, than to be commander-in-chief elsewhere. Kléber's request was granted. He was appointed to the centre of the army of Sambre and Meuse, in which Bernadotte was serving; and subsequently was given the command of the left wing, which was stationed near Düsseldorf. This change separated him from Bernadotte, who had been his vanguard leader throughout the campaign of 1794.[a]

Bernadotte received a great deal of praise in the

[a] *Ney*, par Bonnal, 42, 43.

course of his career; but no higher tribute was ever paid to him than was contained in the following letter, written to Jourdan by Kléber, when active operations seemed imminent. It is dated 16th August 1795, and contains the following reference to Bernadotte :—

"You propose to send me reinforcements. I accept with pleasure, if at their head you will send me a man who is devoted to his duty, who understands my methods of operation, upon whom I can depend with absolute confidence, who is capable of transmitting to his troops the electric fire with which I would inspire him. . . . You know very well that it is of Bernadotte that I speak. I ask you, my dear Jourdan, to send me him. . . . Once the Rhine is crossed I will send him back to you. . . ." [a]

General Jourdan did not comply with this request. Perhaps he did not wish to send all the "electric fire" to the left wing. At all events, he retained Bernadotte, whose division now formed part of the right wing and extended along the Rhine from Cologne to Bingen.

The spring and summer of 1795 were spent by Bernadotte and his comrades in an inactivity, which was not due to any want of energy on their part. The causes were political and the fault lay with the Government.

The historic days of the 9th and 10th Thermidor (27th and 28th July 1794), upon which Robespierre, St. Just, and their companions were arrested and executed, had ended the Terror; but had also ended the virile force, which coincided with the Terror. In St. Just there passed away a cruel and relentless tyrant; but there also passed away the type of man, who knew how to make an army fight and win.[b] St.

[a] *Kléber*, par Pajol, 173. [b] See p. 82 *supra*.

Just, and other Representatives of the People like him, acted like jockeys getting the very utmost out of their horses, and not sparing whip or spur.

Another result of Thermidor was the retirement of Carnot, who had been the real organiser of victory. His life was spared on account of his great public services, but his public services were temporarily dispensed with. If the new Government was more mild than its predecessor, it was also more weak. Nothing was done to organise victory or to strengthen the armies. At the same time the Government was pressing the armies to win victories and blaming them for not doing so.

The army of Sambre and Meuse during 1795 drifted into a position which was well-nigh intolerable. It was expected to cross the Rhine, but no materials were provided for bridging the river. It was expected to invade Germany, but there were no stores or ammunition. The condition of the soldiers became deplorable, and their spirit became dangerous. As the Government did nothing, General Jourdan himself organised materials for bridging the Rhine, but there still remained an entire absence of the munition and supplies necessary for a serious campaign.[a]

Beset by these difficulties, General Jourdan summoned a council of war, at which Bernadotte made the following speech, which is said to have influenced the decision of the council :—

"Exposed as we are on the one hand to the desperate complaints of our soldiers, the result of their sufferings and privations, and on the other hand to the malevolence of the agitators and the exacting requirements of the Government, it is better for us to perish by drowning in crossing the Rhine, or by the

[a] *Victoires, Conquêtes*, iv. 281, 285; Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 12.

sword of the Austrian after having crossed it, than to give the enemies of our glory a favourable opportunity of saying that we have not dared to face courageously the danger which awaited us. So far as the materials and organisation of the army are concerned, I admit the odds are all against us; but the circumstances in which we are placed leave us no alternative. If we resolutely strive for victory, she may be ours. If she should fail us, death at all events will be our refuge."[a]

It was decided, in the desperate spirit of this gasconade, to cross the Rhine and to enter upon the autumn campaign of 1795.

Bernadotte is now entering, as a general of division, upon a period of strenuous campaigning in Germany with the army of Sambre and Meuse. Let us pause for a moment, and inquire how his future rival, Napoleon Bonaparte, was situated at this point of time (September 1795). Bonaparte had distinguished himself at Toulon, and had won promotion, but he was still only a general of brigade, and, therefore, ranked in the army below Bernadotte. He was a suitor for the hand of Eugenie Desirée Clary, who afterwards married Bernadotte, and his courtship was drawing to a close. On 6th September he wrote to his brother Joseph: "The affair with Eugenie must be concluded or broken off." It was broken off; and in a few weeks a sudden opportunity was to open to him the door to fame and fortune. Bonaparte and Bernadotte had not met each other, and were not to meet for another eighteen months.

[a] Lafosse, 76, 77; Sarrans, 10.

CHAPTER XXI

The Invasion of Germany by the Army of Sambre and Meuse in the Autumn of 1795

September 6–October 20, 1795

"Yesterday, with my division, I repulsed the troops who threaten you. With Kléber to command us to-day, who can defeat us?"—*Bernadotte's address to Kléber's troops, 19th October* 1795.

The army of Sambre and Meuse invaded Germany three times during the years 1795 and 1796, and Bernadotte took part, as a general of division, in these three campaigns. There was a resemblance between the plans of these three invasions, because the French army always started from the same point, and took the same direction.[a]

The strategy of these campaigns has been the subject of keen discussion among military authorities, French and Austrian; but there was one point about them, which any civilian can appreciate. They were effective methods of carrying the war into the enemy's country. The French, by these raids into Germany, forced the Austrians to defend themselves on German territory, instead of invading the "natural" frontier of France or attempting to recover Belgium.

Let us briefly follow Bernadotte through the first of these three incursions into Germany—the autumn campaign of 1795.

On the 6th September, General Kléber crossed the Rhine at Düsseldorf, and marched southwards to the river Lahn. His march drew away the Austrians, who were stationed on the German side of the Rhine,

[a] For map of the theatre of these campaigns, see p. 52 *supra*.

and enabled the rest of the army to cross the river at Neuwied. Bernadotte facilitated the passage by seizing and holding an island. He then crossed with his own troops, occupied Montabaur and Heilteit, and took his place on the 20th September with the rest of the army along the line of the river Lahn.

The next step was to cross the river Lahn where the enemy barred the way at Nassau. The operation of crossing the Lahn was described in General Jourdan's despatch of 22nd September in the following terms: "We found the enemy's army on the left bank of the Lahn, occupying a strong position. General Bernadotte attacked the outposts, which were at Nassau. The enemy was driven out with loss. . . . The whole army crossed yesterday."[a]

After the Lahn was crossed, the French on the 23rd September marched to the river Main and invested Mainz. Bernadotte was charged with the blockading of Castel, a suburb of Mainz situate on the east bank of the Rhine. He had his headquarters at Biebrich in the castle of the Prince of Nassau, who had fled at the approach of the French army. During his stay at Biebrich he exhibited his usual moderation. One of the officers of his army writes as follows: "Not a single devastation was made, nor was any contribution exacted. The Prince's steward was compelled to praise the honourable proceedings of Bernadotte, who confined himself to obtaining the mere necessaries for the troops of the division."[b]

So far the French army had completely carried out the plan of campaign. But now their position became a very perilous one. One of the objects of the campaign had been to effect a junction with General

[a] *Moniteur*, 30th September, 24th October 1795.

[b] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 12.

Pichegru, who at this time was in command of the army of the Rhine and Moselle, and to unite with him in investing Mainz. But Pichegru failed to give any effective co-operation. His inaction seemed unaccountable, until it afterwards transpired that he was entering into relations with the enemy, and was negotiating for a Bourbon restoration, in which he was to play the part of General Monk.

Deserted by Pichegru, the army of Sambre and Meuse was threatened by an Austrian flanking movement carried out through neutral territory, in violation of one of the conditions of the Treaty of Basel. Under these circumstances, a council of war was held on 14th October, at which it was decided to retreat.

In the retreat, which commenced on the night of 16th October, Bernadotte commanded the rear-guard of the army. After crossing the Lahn near Ehrenbreitstein, 4000 of his men were cut off from the main body and exposed to a heavy fire from a plateau occupied by the enemy. He ordered a battalion to take the plateau. The battalion, a mere handful of men, wavered under a murderous fire. Bernadotte, galloping up the hill, joined the battalion, shouting, "Take the plateau, or never come back." The plateau was taken.[a]

On the 18th of October, at Caudenbach, he was attacked by a superior force, which he repulsed and by a series of brilliant manœuvres drove back across the Lahn. Writing the next day to Jourdan, Kléber in a postscript said: "Bernadotte has gained an advantage over the enemy."[a]

When the retreating army reached the Rhine, they were met by an unforeseen disaster. As they approached the river, the whole sky was seen to be illuminated.[b] It turned out that the bridge of boats

[a] Lafosse, 79, 80; Sarrans, 11. [b] Lafosse, 81–85.

was in flames, owing to an unfortunate mistake, through which some burning barges had been allowed to drift down the river. While the bridge was being reconstructed, the enemy had to be kept at bay, and in the meantime the army was placed in a position of extreme peril. Bernadotte came up fresh from his success of Caudenbach, and, with General Kléber's consent, seized the opportunity of rousing the drooping spirit of the troops by a characteristic gasconade. He exclaimed, "Yesterday, with my division, I repulsed the troops who threaten you. With Kléber to command us to-day, who can defeat us?" The rear-guard, by presenting a bold front, held the enemy in check; and in the evening Kléber was able to write to Jourdan: "The mischief is repaired. Instead of despondency I find everywhere the utmost energy, and all our troubles will soon be over." A bridge was put together before midnight; and on the following day, 20th October, the river was crossed and the French army were safely on their own side of the Rhine.

The burning of the bridge of boats appears to have been due to a blunder on the part of one of Marceau's officers. Marceau was quite blameless in the matter; but, holding himself responsible for the mistake of his subordinate, he wrote a despairing letter to Jourdan, and, in the extremity of his despair, would have shot himself, if his aide-de-camp Maugars had not removed his pistols.[a]

Thus terminated the first of Jourdan's three invasions of Germany, in which Bernadotte had distinguished himself at the taking of Nassau, and as rear-guard commander during the retreat.

[a] *Marceau*, par Parfait, 273; par Marceau-Sargent, 74; *Victoires, Conquêtes*, v. 15, 16.

CHAPTER XXII

THE CONSTITUTION OF 1795 AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORY

OCTOBER 1795

"The Directory with the two Councils was nothing but organised anarchy. The conquest of the natural frontiers was nothing but systemised war. War and anarchy conducted a nation, which desired order and victory, to a military dictatorship." —ALBERT SOREL, *L'Europe et la Révolution Française*, iv. 472, 473.

THE army of Sambre and Meuse, after its incursion into Germany, found itself, on the evening of the 20th October 1795, back again on the left bank of the Rhine. For the next five weeks General Jourdan was forced to take up an attitude of inaction.

The explanation of General Jourdan's inactivity is to be found in the circumstance that a change of Constitution was being carried out at Paris. The National Convention had for three years, ever since the abolition of Royalty, governed France as a sovereign assembly, executing its decrees through its own committees. It was now replaced by the "Executive Directory," which came into operation in October 1795, and was known as the "Constitution of the Year 3."

This is not the place to discuss, at any length or with any elaborateness, the Directorial Constitution. But, in order to follow Bernadotte's life intelligently through the remainder of this volume, it is necessary to remind ourselves of some of the characteristics of the Government which he served in various capacities.

The Directorial Constitution consisted of two chambers—the Council of Ancients, numbering 250,

and the Council of 500, so called from the number of its members. Laws were initiated by the Council of 500, but did not become law until adopted by the Council of Ancients. The Executive was vested in five directors selected by the Council of Ancients from a list compiled by the Council of 500. In every year a third of the legislature was to retire, and to be renewed by popular election; and in every year a director was to retire by lot, and to be replaced by a successor selected in the same way as the original directors. Each director took the presidency in turn for periods of three months.

The Directorial Constitution was dependent, from first to last, in the ultimate resort, upon military force. This dependence was a birthmark; for the new Constitution was born amid the crash of the military *coup d'état* of the 13th Vendémiaire (3rd of October 1795). It was the carrying out of this *coup d'état* which opened the door to the marvellous career of the young artillery officer, Napoleon Bonaparte. From that day's work flowed, in regular succession, the campaigns of Italy and of Egypt, the glory and the power which lit up the Consulate and the Empire, the banishments to Elba and St. Helena, the tomb in the Pantheon, and the legend that will never die.

The *coup d'état* of Vendémiaire was the first of a series of military *coups d'état*, by which the Directory was kept alive during its brief existence of four years. Two causes exposed it to liability to military intervention. One cause was the absence of any constitutional means of preserving an equilibrium between the legislature and the Executive. The directors were liable to find themselves, after an annual election of a third of the legislature, face to face with a hostile majority in the chambers. The Constitution provided no means

of adjusting a conflict between the directors and the chambers, except an appeal, by one side or the other, to military force. The other cause was the aggressive foreign policy of the Republic,—the policy of Natural Boundaries,—which by committing France to a continuous European war, and to the maintenance of immense armaments, aptly served to pave a path to power for some soldier of fortune.

Albert Sorel, in the passage placed at the head of this chapter, describes the Directorial Constitution as "organised anarchy," and its foreign policy as "systematised war," and says that it led the nation to a military dictatorship. He names five generals, besides Napoleon Bonaparte, who, by their services to the Republic and their military attainments, became, in his opinion, possible aspirants to supreme power. These were Carnot, Hoche, Moreau, Bernadotte, and Pichegru. He attributes Bernadotte's failure to his caution in waiting for power to come to him, instead of seizing it when the opportunity offered; and Bonaparte's success to the fact that he was the one man who had, besides the ambition to aspire to sovereign power, the daring to grasp it, and the skill to hold it.[a]

But in October 1795, Bernadotte had not begun to dream of sovereign power. He was only a divisional general, a soldier of the second rank in one of the armies of the Republic.

Some reference is due to the personality of the five directors, who constituted the new Executive Government, and possessed, among other powers, the right of appointing ministers, ambassadors, and generals of the Republic. The director best known to history, as such, was Barras, a man of action and of pleasure,

[a] Sorel, iv. 473 et seq.

whose frankly unscrupulous personality typified the system of which he was a principal figure. He was the only one of the original directors, who retained office during the four years of the continuance of the Directory. The other members of the Directory, as originally constituted, were Larevellière-Lépeaux and Rewbell—two regicides of the second rank—and Carnot and Latourneur, two engineer officers, who represented the moderate Republicans of that day. Carnot was the celebrated "organiser of victory," who had now returned to public life. Latourneur was acquainted with Bernadotte, and there appear to have been friendly relations between them. Otherwise, Bernadotte was as yet unknown to the new Executive, except as a distinguished divisional general in the army of Sambre and Meuse.[a]

[a] For information about the establishment of the Directory reference may be made to Sorel, iv. 435–473; *L'Histoire Générale*, viii. 374–376; *L'Histoire politique de la Révolution*, par Aulard, iii. 557 et seq.; *Cambridge Modern History*, viii. 392–397.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE WINTER CAMPAIGN IN THE HUNSRÜCK—THE CAPTURE OF CREUZNACH

OCTOBER–DECEMBER 1795

"Send for the 71st. It will repair the disgrace with which this regiment has covered itself."—*Bernadotte at Creuznach, 29th November* 1795.

"I am not weak enough to wish for death, but I believe that, unless the Government takes some severe measures, a glorious death will be the greatest benefit that can befall a French general." — *Bernadotte's letter to General Jourdan, 3rd December* 1795.

WHILE history was being made in Paris, the army of the Sambre and Meuse was marking time on the Rhine. Jourdan was willing to take the field; but there was no effective Government capable of giving him instructions. Meanwhile, the Austrians had crossed the Rhine in the south, and were advancing northwards towards the river Nahe. Between the Nahe and the Moselle lay a district called the Hunsrück (or the Hundsrück), which was now threatened by the advancing Austrian force. At this danger-point Marceau was in command; and we find him writing letters to the commander-in-chief on 23rd October and 1st November, asking that Bernadotte should be detached to his assistance.[a]

When the Executive Directory were installed in office at the end of October, they were not prepared with any plan of campaign. After some vacillation, they sent orders to General Jourdan to stop the enemy's advance, leaving him free to use his own discretion as to his method of doing so.

[a] *Marceau*, par Parfait, 373; ib. par Maze, 198–200.

Jourdan collected 40,000 men near Simmern, in the Hunsrück, and marched southwards to meet the enemy. Bernadotte, in the centre of the army, was charged with the attack on Creuznach, on the river Nahe, which was garrisoned by Pandours. These Pandours were Hungarian infantry from a district or tribe, which was noted in those days for ferocity and barbarity.

Creúznach had been a fortress of note in the Roman and Carlovingian ages, but in the seventeenth century a French army had raided it, and a ruined castle, which overlooked the town, remained as a memorial of their visit. The officer commanding Bernadotte's vanguard presuming that the old town was feebly defended, dashed into its streets without taking any precaution against surprise. The Pandours, issuing from a well-laid ambuscade, repulsed the vanguard, taking some French prisoners, whose heads they immediately cut off before the eyes of their retreating comrades.

Mortified at the repulse of his vanguard, and indignant at these barbarities, Bernadotte, putting himself at the head of his infantry, drove the Austrians out of Creuznach, at the point of the bayonet, and pursued them so closely that he was on their heels as they crossed the bridge, which spanned the Nahe. An officer's leg was carried off by a cannon ball at Bernadotte's side.[a] Three hundred Austrians were killed, and five hundred prisoners were taken.[b]

On this occasion Bernadotte did not succeed in rallying the retreating vanguard without a resort to his Gascon readiness of speech. The men were

[a] Sarrazin says that the officer was Cafarelli.

[b] Jomini, vii. 223; *Victoires, Conquêtes*, v. 98; Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 13, 14; ib. *Mémoires*, 43–45; Lafosse, 85, 86; Capitaine Français, 101.

at first indisposed to return to Creuznach and face the Pandours. Bernadotte, observing their hesitation, turned round to one of his aides-de-camp, and exclaimed, " Send for the 71st. It will repair the disgrace with which this regiment has covered itself." The incident is referred to in a work devoted to collecting examples of military eloquence. The writer adds: " At these words the men shouted ' Forward,' and the same troops, who a few minutes before had been struck with panic, now turned round and forced their way back into Creuznach, carrying all before them, and inflicting a severe loss upon the enemy."[a]

We are afforded a glimpse of the desperate condition of the French army in the Hunsrück, at the end of November and the beginning of December, in the contents of two letters, which were addressed by Marceau and Bernadotte to General Jourdan.

General Marceau, in a letter of 30th November addressed to the commander-in-chief from Messenheim, wrote as follows: " I am so disgusted that nothing restrains me from quitting the service and my command except my honour and my regard for you. I prefer to die in battle, even if I am alone there, rather than to fail in carrying out your intentions. But . . . I can no longer place any reliance upon my troops or upon anything else except my own readiness to die. That is all I think I can assure you of." On the same day he wrote: " I have to face obstacles a hundred times more terrible than any that the enemy can present. My men have neither bread nor boots, and the roads are in such a condition that the soldiers sink into the mud up to their knees."[b]

Almost on the same day Bernadotte was writing to the commander-in-chief from another district of

[a] *L'Eloquence Militaire*, ii. 123. [b] *Marceau*, par Maze, 219, 221.

the Hunsrück, complaining bitterly of the impossibility of maintaining proper discipline under the existing conditions, and under the regulations imposed by the Government upon the generals of the army. He says that, unless he is given more stringent powers of stopping brigandage and disorder, he cannot prevent its spread, and he concludes in these words, which bear a strange resemblance to the passage just quoted from the letter of Marceau. Bernadotte writes: "I am not weak enough to wish for death, but I believe that, unless the Government takes some severe measures, a glorious death will be the greatest benefit that can befall a French general."[a]

Another incident connected with the taking of Creuznach deserves to be recorded. It illustrates one of the fierce phases of the Revolutionary wars. An inexorable law condemned to the scaffold all French *émigrés*, who were taken prisoners under arms, as well as those who harboured or helped them.

After the taking of Creuznach, Bernadotte was going his rounds, as was his habit, questioning the prisoners, and seeing to their wants and comforts. He came to a group, and asked them what corps they belonged to. "You see we are French," was the reply. "You mean Belgians," said Bernadotte, with a significant look; and before the day was over he arranged their exchange for some prisoners of his division.[b]

The engagement at Creuznach took place on 29th November. The army continued to hold their position on the Nahe for another fortnight; and General Marceau gained a brilliant success on 10th December. But General Jourdan had good reason to fear that his line of retreat and of communica-

[a] Lafosse, 86, 87. [b] Sarrans, 11, 12.

tions might be cut off; and he considered himself very fortunate to have the opportunity of accepting an armistice which the Austrians offered on 19th December.

The campaign in the Hunsrück accomplished little except to enhance the reputation of Marceau and of Bernadotte, whose *coup de main* at Creuznach is referred to in several places as a noteworthy feat of arms.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE SIX MONTHS' ARMISTICE—BERNADOTTE SAVES HIS COUSIN FROM THE GALLEYS

"People in Paris sometimes know how, for the sake of worthy friends, to put the laws to sleep."—*The President of the Court of Cassation to Bernadotte's messenger, June* 1796.

"Allow me to assure you that you have rendered us a greater service than if you had saved one of our lives, since you have preserved our honour."—*Extract from letter from Bernadotte's brother to General Sarrazin, 6th June* 1796.

DURING the armistice of 1796, which lasted for about six months, Bernadotte's division remained on the banks of the Rhine with head-quarters at Boppard, to the south of Coblenz. One of his officers tells us that the general occupied himself visiting all the quarters of his division; reviewing and instructing them; giving particular attention to the comfort and subsistence of his army; conversing, mainly on military topics, with the officers of his staff, with whom he shared his meals. He is described as taking walks with his comrades along the banks of the Rhine in à blue mufti with a cap of fox-skin fur, indulging in day-dreams, which at this period of his life did not soar beyond a hope to be enabled ultimately to retire on half-pay and end his days in his native town of Pau.[a]

It was towards the end of this armistice that an incident occurred which is often alluded to by General Sarrazin. One day, while General Bernadotte and his staff were at table, a letter arrived from the capital informing him that a cousin and friend, Titou Bernadotte, had been condemned to the

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 12–18.

galleys for eight years. His crime was of the same kind as that, of which Bernadotte had himself been guilty, when, in violation of the laws of the Republic, he saved the *émigrés* from the penalty of death, by declaring them to be Belgians, and exchanging them, before their identity could be discovered. It appears that Titou Bernadotte had attempted to save a friend, who was an *émigré*, from the scaffold by means of a false certificate of civism.

Bernadotte was much distressed, and wished to set off for Paris at once. The commander-in-chief, however, could not spare him, as a renewal of hostilities might occur any day. It was accordingly arranged that Bernadotte's chief of the staff, General Sarrazin, should go, armed with letters from General Jourdan for the Minister of War,[a] and from Bernadotte himself to his relatives and connections in Paris, and to the only director with whom he was acquainted, Latourneur de la Manche.

Sarrazin started for Paris on the 19th May 1796, and on 26th May Bernadotte wrote to him the following letter from Boppard :—

"*Equality, Liberty*

"ARMY OF THE SAMBRE AND MEUSE, BOPPARD. *The 3rd of Prairial, the Fourth Year of the Republic (the 24th of May* 1796)

"BERNADOTTE TO HIS FRIEND SARRAZIN, NOW AT PARIS.

"Citizen Loubix, brother-in-law to Titou Bernadotte, must now be in Paris, and I should be glad if you would speak to him. Citizen Claverie, who, as it appears from his direction, still lives at Paris, rue de la Revolution, No. 7, will give you the necessary information about him. Write as soon as you possibly can, and tell me how my relation's affair is going on.

"The armistice was broken yesterday by the

[a] Sarrazin, *Guerres civiles*, 524.

Austrians. We are again, my dear Sarrazin, following the fortune of battles. I am collecting my troops in the Hundsrück, and shall advance under the auspices of victory. Pray to Heaven that success may crown our efforts. Our cause is good. Our enemies, in their vain rage, still pretend to lay down the law to a great nation! Well, my dear Sarrazin, we shall once more convince them of their impotence. The moment for striking a blow is drawing near. The soldiers only await the signal.

"Adieu! Direct your letters to Simmern. Next mail will bring you fifteen hundred livres in *mandats*, and the following another fifteen hundred. Inform me whether I must send you more. Should you have an opportunity of seeing the director Latourneur de la Manche, pray apologise to him for my importunities, and request him to accept the assurance of my respectful devotion. . . .

"J. BERNADOTTE.

"P.S.—My best compliments to Hatry and Charpentier. I shall be at Simmern on the 6th; send me your letters to that place."[a]

General Sarrazin in several places describes the success of his mission. He writes: "Two hours afterwards I was on my way to Paris, with letters for the principal authorities. Everywhere that I was announced as Bernadotte's chief of the staff, I was received in the most distinguished manner. I was loaded with attention from all the members of the Directory, and particularly by Latourneur de la Manche, who entered warmly into the interests of Bernadotte's unfortunate relative. Fifteen days sufficed to annul the sentence, and to restore to liberty a man, who had only been deprived of it through his love of justice and zeal for the cause of humanity."

In another place General Sarrazin supplements this account of his mission by relating that the president of the Court of Cassation, observing his

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 18.

surprise at his success in procuring the discharge of the accused, said with a laugh, " People in Paris sometimes know how, for the sake of worthy friends, to put the laws to sleep (*faire dormir les lois*)."[a]

Sarrazin gives an extract from a letter, dated 6th June 1796, which he received from Bernadotte's elder brother, the advocate of Pau. It concluded with the following passage: " Allow me to assure you that you have rendered us a greater service than if you had saved one of our lives, since you have preserved our honour. I am, in saying this, the interpreter of the feelings of all my family, which is very numerous and is much respected in Pau and in its neighbourhood. We shall not be happy until we have found some opportunity of testifying to you our lively recognition of this signal service, the recollection of which shall be for ever graven on our hearts."[a]

This passage, in language and tone, bears a family resemblance to the writings and utterances of the writer's soldier brother. It suggests the reflection that General Bernadotte's exuberance of thought and speech, and his oft-declared fidelity to the obligations of honour, were marks of his Béarnais birth, and in harmony with the spirit and atmosphere of his home.

General Sarrazin appears to have relieved the monotony of his visit to the capital by proceedings, which caused some scandal and annoyance to Bernadotte's friends and relatives, to whom the purpose of his mission had procured him an introduction. Bernadotte was, of course, informed of Sarrazin's proceedings, and we are not surprised to learn that, when the latter returned to the army, he was received by Bernadotte with a marked coldness, of which Sarrazin expresses himself unable to divine the cause.[a] He

[a] Sarrazin, *Mém.* 48–51.

was all the more puzzled and hurt by the chilliness of his reception, when he observed the general displaying his accustomed cordiality to the other officers, and showing unrestrained emotion, when one of his captains fell mortally wounded at his side in an engagement on the Lahn.

This falling out between Bernadotte and Sarrazin had the following development, which is recorded by the latter, and is not without a touch of humour.[a]

The inhabitants of Selingstadt, delighted at having escaped any billeting of troops, sent a deputation to Bernadotte for the purpose of expressing their gratitude, and of presenting him with two fine chargers in acknowledgment of his considerate treatment of their town. Bernadotte refused to accept the horses, replying to the deputation that "the Republicans made war for the purpose of spreading the blessings of liberty, and not for the purpose of receiving gifts."

Sarrazin, who is sometimes found, in his relations with Bernadotte, playing the part of a Sancho Panza to a Don Quixote, describes himself as having been deeply grieved at the disappointment, which the general's refusal seemed to him to have caused to the German deputation. He accordingly offered to console the inhabitants of Selingstadt by accepting the horses for their value in *mandats*, in which undesirable currency the French officers were themselves paid. The Germans assented, and Sarrazin having joyfully unburdened himself of a handful of *mandats*, appropriated the two chargers, and took the first opportunity of appearing on parade mounted upon one of them.

Bernadotte recognised the horse, and instantly placed Sarrazin under arrest. Sarrazin indignantly protested, and produced his receipt. No Republican

[a] Sarrazin, *Mém.* 52, 54.

could lawfully challenge the face value of a *mandat*, and Sarrazin was released from arrest.

Having exculpated himself in this way, Sarrazin now assumed an attitude of injured innocence. He bitterly complained of having been arrested without being given an opportunity of explanation, and offered to resign his commission, and to challenge Bernadotte to a duel with swords. He claims that this was a generous proceeding on his part, because he himself excelled in the use of a pistol, while Bernadotte had been fencing master in the Royal-la-Marine Regiment, and was a finished swordsman.

Sarrazin's account of what ensued is worth quoting. It only requires a little sense of humour to read between its lines. He writes: "My action astonished him. I was acting within my rights, because I only challenged him after offering to resign my commission. In that way honour could be vindicated without any violation of discipline. He was too just and loyal not to recognise that he was in the wrong. He had no reason to fear the result, because he was a better swordsman than I was. . . . As I was leaving for Frankfort, to proceed to Jourdan's head-quarters, he came to me with Adjutant-General Mireur, returned me my letter of resignation, and said that he regretted his hastiness. He admitted that he was in the wrong and requested me to forget it. I tore up my resignation. We embraced, and all was forgotten."

We must now return to the army of Sambre and Meuse, which, when Sarrazin started for Paris, was about to recommence hostilities.[a]

[a] The incidents, which are the subject of this chapter, are alluded to by Sarrazin in several places, e.g. *Phil.* ii. 15–18; *Mémoires*, 46–54; *Guerres civiles*, 524; *Guerre de 24 ans*, 483.

CHAPTER XXV

THE SECOND INVASION OF GERMANY IN MAY AND JUNE 1796—BERNADOTTE COVERS THE RETREAT

MAY AND JUNE 1796

"Bernadotte fut chargé de couvrir la retraite. . . . Son sang-froid et la précision de ses manœuvres excitèrent l'admiration de tous."—*Mémoires de la Campagne de 1796* par General Jourdan, p. 40.

"Bernadotte formant l'arrière-garde avec le 30e régiment et la cavalerie, en imposa à l'ennemi par sa bonne contenance: et l'armée, revenue sans perdre un homme dans l'île de Neuwied, leva le pont qui y conduit."—JOMINI, vol. viii. p. 155.

ON 21st May the Austrians gave notice determining, at the end of ten days, the armistice; and on 31st May, General Kléber started on his march up the eastern bank of the Rhine, from Düsseldorf to the river Lahn. In the course of this march he fought and won a brilliant victory at Altenkirchen. He was supported in this engagement by three future Marshals of the Empire—Lefèbvre, Soult, and Ney. With their help he overcame all resistance, and took up a position which enabled the main body of the French army, including Bernadotte's division, which had hurried up from the Hunsrück by forced marches, to commence on 7th June to cross the Rhine at Neuwied.

Having crossed the river, the whole French army marched southwards, and on 12th June were stationed along the river Lahn. Bernadotte, on the right of the army, occupied the heights from Lahnstein to Nassau, from which he had dislodged a detachment of troops of Hesse-Darmstadt.

The army remained in this position until 15th

GENERAL NEY.
"The Bravest of the Brave," who became a Marshal of France, Duke of Elchingen, and Prince of the Moskowa.

GENERAL LEFÈBVRE.
"The old French Guardsman," who became Marshal of France and Duke of Danzig.

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[*These portraits are of the Empire period.*]

June. Jourdan has been blamed for this delay. He is said to have missed the tide by not striking sooner. At all events, he was attacked on the 15th, and suffered defeat at Wetzlar.

The French army now retired to the Rhine, Kléber and the left wing to Düsseldorf, Jourdan with the rest of the army to Neuwied.

Bernadotte, during this retreat, wrote on 17th June to the commander-in-chief a letter, which illustrates the anxieties, which are incidental to a retreat of the kind, and contains a reference to Maison, who became a marshal after the Restoration :—

" I beg of you, General, to send me my orders as soon as possible. I must frankly confess that I am afraid of leaving some of my light infantry behind me. They are so scattered, that I have to employ all the officers of my staff to find and collect them. Maison, who commanded a flank corps, and had to remain at Nassau until five o'clock, reports that the enemy have established a bridge at Nassau." [a] (24)

Upon the following day, 18th June, three divisions, of which Bernadotte's formed the rear-guard, were ordered to recross the Rhine at Neuwied. When the retreating army reached the river, it was found that their bridge of boats had failed them again. On this occasion the enemy had succeeded in breaking the bridge by driving heavy rafts against the boats. It became necessary to hold the enemy in check, while the bridge was being repaired. General Jourdan writes : " The bridge having been repaired, the army crossed to the left bank in the best possible order. General Bernadotte was charged with the duty of covering the retreat with all the cavalry and with the 30th Regiment of infantry. This rear-guard,

[a] From letter in writer's possession. See App. Note (24B).

although closely pressed by the Austrian cavalry, who were protected by the fire of their artillery, effected the retreat without losing a single man. Its sang-froid and the precision of its manœuvres excited the admiration of everyone."[a] A military history declares that the coolness and steadiness displayed by Bernadotte's rear-guard astonished the Austrians; and Jomini, in the passage placed at the head of this chapter, says that Bernadotte overawed the enemy by the bold front which he presented (*par se bonne contenance*).[a]

After the rest of the army had recrossed the Rhine at Neuwied, Kléber continued his march to Düsseldorf with the left wing. On his way he gave battle and was defeated with heavy loss. Jourdan blamed him severely for his imprudence in having run this risk, and this was the beginning of a rift between Jourdan and Kléber, which, as we shall see, widened later on.

Kléber's reverse during the retreat did not wipe out his victory at Altenkirchen; and the chief honours of this short campaign remained with the victors of Altenkirchen—Kléber, Lefèbvre, Soult, Ney, and the other chiefs of the left wing. After Altenkirchen, the best feat of arms of the campaign was the rear-guard action by which Bernadotte covered the retreat across the Rhine.

He now returned to his head-quarters at Coblenz, and gave his troops a brief rest before the resumption of hostilities.

[a] Jourdan, *Campagne de 1796*, 40; *Victoires, Conquêtes*, vi. 42; Jomini, viii. 155.

CHAPTER XXVI

The Third Invasion of Germany in July 1796

JULY–AUGUST 1796

"Une pareille erreur pouvait faire échouer l'opération—mais elle fut réparée par la valeur des troupes et l'intrépidité des chefs."—JOURDAN'S *Mémoires de la Campagne de 1796*, p. 54 (*with reference to Bernadotte's third crossing of the Rhine on 2nd July* 1796).

"Mark my words: you will do as you are ordered to do, or I'll have this place burnt down about your ears."—*Bernadotte to the Professors of Nuremberg University, Altdorf, August* 1796.

AFTER taking ten days' rest on the western bank of the Rhine, the army of Sambre and Meuse received orders to recross the river and to invade Germany for the third time, with the object of preventing the Austrians from uniting against General Moreau, who had succeeded General Pichegru as French commander-in-chief on the Upper Rhine.

The plan of campaign and the opening moves in the game were the same as in the two previous campaigns. General Kléber, with the left wing, started from Düsseldorf on 28th June, and marched southwards along the eastern bank of the Rhine to the river Lahn. When he had sufficiently advanced, the main body of the army proceeded to cross at Neuwied, with Bernadotte's division as the vanguard.

Some five or six thousand Austrians, under General Finke, were protecting the right bank of the Rhine, with headquarters at the village of Bendorf. The French transport barges were supposed to carry 800 men, besides cavalry and artillery; and, upon this assumption, they would, if sufficient in numbers and

if properly equipped, have transported Bernadotte's whole division in two hours. It turned out at the last moment that only two barges were available, capable of carrying no more than 400 men, and so badly provided with oars as to be slow in their movements. Bernadotte, however, resolved not to abandon the attempt, and ordered a boat-load of grenadiers at 3 a.m. in the morning of 2nd July to make a dash for Bendorf. This boat-load of grenadiers was commanded by Adjutant-General Mireur, who on landing divided his small force into three columns, led respectively by Maison, Maurin, and himself. The three officers had careers before them, which went near being cut short that night. The Austrians were surprised in their beds. General Finke escaped in his shirt through a window; and when he had rallied his men, found that Bernadotte had reinforced his first boat-load with another. This made it impossible for Finke to regain Bendorf. On the contrary, Bernadotte drove the Austrians out of the place, and pursued them to Vallendar, where he met and repulsed some troops from the garrison of Ehrenbreitstein, who had made a sally from their eagle's nest.

It was a daring and useful operation, by which, in Jourdan's words, the mistake about the transport arrangements was repaired " par la valeur des troupes et l'intrépidité des chefs."[a]

At Vallendar, in the course of a conversation about the novel attitude of autocratic independence which General Bonaparte was beginning to adopt in Italy, Bernadotte was heard to drop the phrase, " These changes will excite no surprise so long as men still stand in our way." This observation was repeated,

[a] Jourdan, *Campagne de 1796*, 54; Lafosse, 89, 90; Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii.

and understood to mean that Bernadotte had in his mind a military dictatorship under Bonaparte. It would appear more probable, as a German writer has suggested, that he was giving vague expression to resentment at the Directory's neglect of military requirements, which was regarded by the army as standing in the way of military success.[a]

For the next six weeks the army was advancing into the heart of Germany. The first obstacle was the river Lahn. Bernadotte, after occupying the heights of Hirscheid and Montabaur, had a sharp engagement on 6th July with the Austrians, attacking them before Limburg and driving them out of their position, to quote Jourdan, "avec son impetuosité ordinaire." This day's work helped to make the French masters of the northern bank of the river Lahn, but not without further severe fighting on the 7th.[b]

Having, on the 9th July, crossed the Lahn near Limburg, he drove the enemy before him; and passing Wiesbaden, he took up, on the 11th, a position which commanded Castel, the principal suburb of Mainz, and so prevented the garrison of Mainz from embarrassing the movement of the army.[b]

Bernadotte's next move was to bridge the river Main, and to send a detachment across the river towards Darmstadt. The troops of Hesse-Darmstadt had given him a great deal of trouble, and the people expected to experience retribution. They were surprised to find that perfect discipline was preserved. The Prince of Hesse-Darmstadt, who had fled to Dresden, sent Bernadotte a charger from his stables as a mark of his gratitude and regard. Bernadotte

[a] Hans Kloeber, 58–61.

[b] *Moniteur*, 17th and 20th July 1796; Jourdan, *Campagne de 1796*, 67–71.

insisted on paying for the animal.[a] The acquisition was a fortunate one, as the horse, by jumping a big fence at an emergency, saved his life later on.

Frankfort having capitulated to General Jourdan on 16th July, Bernadotte was sent to Aschaffenburg to cover the line of communication between Frankfort and Wurzburg. At Aschaffenburg he remained for some days patrolling the banks of the river Main, and it appears from the Austrian history of the campaign that this patrol was part of a general movement which had the effect of compelling the Austrians to retreat.[b]

During this patrol, Bernadotte made important captures of stores, including forty-five boats loaded with flour and forage, and valued, according to the despatches of General Jourdan, at a million francs.[c]

Before the end of July Bernadotte was ordered to join the main army, which, at the beginning of August, owing to the illness of General Jourdan, was for a few days (2nd–7th August) commanded by General Kléber. In Kléber's despatch of 3rd August we read that in the early days of August, Bernadotte, on the road from Bamberg to Berg Ebrach, "met an Austrian force superior in numbers, and that he attacked all in his path with impetuosity, and forced the enemy to abandon the country which he had been ordered to occupy." On 6th August Bernadotte's division helped to drive the enemy behind the river Aisch. On 7th August Jourdan returned to duty, and Kléber had to retire on sick leave. Bernadotte advanced rapidly, taking possession of Nuremberg on 10th August, and on the 14th reaching Altdorf, where the following incident occurred.

[a] Hans Kloeber, 58–61.
[b] Archduke Charles, *Campagne de 1796*, 191, chap. x.
[c] *Moniteur*, 4th, 8th, and 14th August 1796.

Altdorf, which was a small place with only a few hundred inhabitants, was at this period the seat of the University of Nuremberg. The University authorities had petitioned the French commander-in-chief, General Jourdan, that the University and the professors' houses might be exempt from billeting. Jourdan's chief of the staff had given the University authorities a letter of exemption from billeting by "volunteers." Bernadotte's officers refused to act on the letter of exemption. "We are not volunteers," they said; "the letter does not refer to us."

Two professors appealed to Bernadotte, whom they found engaged upon the difficult task of finding quarters for 8000 officers and men in a place little larger than a village. Bernadotte was well known for his lenity in dealing with conquered or occupied places, and especially for the respect which he displayed on several occasions to universities and seats of learning. But his officers had to be housed; and it was no great hardship for the University to have to house them. When the professors arrived to press their claim for exemption, the usually polite general received them with a profusion of Gascon declamation, of which the following was the discouraging peroration: "Very well," he exclaimed; "we won't behave in Germany as Germans behaved in France. But mark my words: you will do as you are ordered to do, or I'll have this place burnt down about your ears." The professors retired, and the University was probably none the worse for having lodged some French officers for two nights.[a]

A German writer gives the following comment upon this incident. He writes:—

"Considering Bernadotte's humane disposition,

[a] Hans Kloeber, 62.

and in view of his behaviour to Universities on later occasions, one can only assume as the reason for this scene that there was some excitement on both sides and some misunderstanding in consequence of it. With regard to the letter of protection, it seems that some staff officer of Jourdan's had played a joke upon the professors, who wanted to study in dressing-gowns, with long pipes in their mouths, during the roar of the cannon, the clamour of the storming soldiery, and the groaning of the wounded; and in their egotism wished, to the injury of their fellow-citizens, to be free from the burden of quartering soldiers. Perhaps, too, when they asked for exemption, they did not describe their town at Jourdan's head-quarters quite in accordance with the truth. Where were the superior officers to be quartered if not in the college and at the professors' houses? No one, who understands war, could promise seriously what stood in the letter of protection."[a]

The same German writer is of opinion that it was this animated conversation in Altdorf with the two professors of Nuremberg University, that gave rise to a fable that Bernadotte had sacked Nuremberg and had been court-martialled for it.[a] There was no sacking of Nuremberg, and the story of the court martial originated, perhaps, in a college meeting at which it is highly probable that the general was severely handled by the Board of Studies.

It was during the operations, which have been recorded in this chapter, that the Government wrote to Bernadotte: "The Directory have become accustomed to see victories won by those of their defenders who obey your orders."[b] Bernadotte was now about to meet what was perhaps the most stirring military experience of his life. How it happened, and how he bore himself, will be related in the next chapter.

[a] Hans Kloeber, 63. [b] Lafosse, 95.

CHAPTER XXVII

BERNADOTTE'S RAID ON RATISBON—THE BATTLE OF TEINING

AUGUST 15–27, 1796

"You know, my friends, what care I have always taken of your welfare, since I had the happiness of commanding such brave fellows as yourselves. The opportunity now presents itself of testifying your grateful sense of it, of deserving well of your country, and of covering yourselves with glory."—*Bernadotte's address to his troops before the battle of Teining.*

"The rest of the campaign would have been still more disastrous had it not been for the intrepid resistance to the Austrians made by Bernadotte, the general of the vanguard, who had become the general of the rear-guard. . . . Foreign and French military men said at the time that there was something of Xenophon in Bernadotte."—*Extract from Memoirs of Barras.*

WE now approach what was, perhaps, the best performance in the whole of Bernadotte's military career—namely, the raid on Ratisbon and the battle of Teining.

In the middle of August, Bernadotte being in command of an advance guard at Altdorf, was ordered to detach his corps and to proceed in a southerly direction towards Ratisbon, while General Jourdan and the rest of the army marched eastwards towards the frontiers of Bohemia.

Jomini truly says[a] that a glance at the map will show how hazardous was this move. It was not, however, contemplated, or intended, by the commander-in-chief to expose the little force to the perils which met it. General Jourdan did not anticipate those perils. His despatch of 18th August shows that he detached Bernadotte's vanguard to act as a scouting or skirmishing force, with a double duty.[b]

[a] Jomini, ix. 11; and see map, p. 52 *supra*.

[b] *Moniteur*, 27th August 1796.

It was, in the first place, to protect the right flank of the army of Sambre and Meuse, and, in the second place, to get into touch with the army of the Rhine and Moselle, which under General Moreau was supposed to be near the Danube. This is not the place to discuss the military aspect of this desperate enterprise, because Bernadotte was not responsible for the design, but only for its execution. Suffice it to say that the result was to lead Bernadotte and his division into a trap, from which it required a singular combination of skill, courage, and good fortune to enable him to escape.

The Archduke Charles, upon hearing of the approach of this feeble vanguard, immediately started with 20,000 men, and, having been reinforced by other troops on the way, advanced to meet Bernadotte. The extraordinary disproportion between the numbers of the two opposing forces, which now were advancing towards each other, would be incredible if it was not practically undisputed. The Austrian memoirs of the campaign estimate the army of Bernadotte as 9000, and that of the Archduke Charles as 28,000. Sarrazin's figures are less than 10,000 against 25,000. We may fairly conclude that the Austrian force was almost, if not quite, treble that of Bernadotte.[a]

Bernadotte advanced from Altdorf, and, passing Neumarkt, arrived at the village and heights of Teining on the road to Ratisbon, where he established himself on 20th August. He had to fight every inch of his way, but held his own, and succeeded in cutting the communications between the Archduke's main army and his vanguard. It was in the course of his march from Altdorf to Teining that

[a] Archduke Charles, *Campagne de 1796*, chap. xvi. 157 (chart).

he came to realise for the first time the gravity of the task, which had been allotted to him. On the 20th he wrote to Jourdan pressing for reinforcements, and he sent the following letter to General Moreau, which conveyed information, and perhaps also a hint to that general to co-operate, or to come to his assistance. More than a hint from a general of division to a commander-in-chief would have been out of place. The hint, however, was not taken, and Bernadotte was left to fight it out unaided :—

" NEUMARKT, *20th August* 1796.

" CITIZEN-GENERAL,—Information reaches me to the effect that Prince Charles has only left a small body of troops on the right bank of the Danube, and that, hoping to conceal his movements from you, he is advancing with 20,000 men by forced marches against the army of Jourdan. Yesterday I was fighting all day with his troops. I make haste to give you this information, the correctness of which I guarantee ; and I add that orders have been given for a general attack at midday to-day against the right wing of the army of Sambre and Meuse. You will see, General, if your position will permit you to make Prince Charles repent his daring movements. It is from fear that your scouts may have failed to acquaint you that I send you this information." [a]

General Jourdan despatched General Bonnaud to Bernadotte's assistance; but Bonnaud was delayed by the condition of the roads, and was unable to accomplish his errand. Meanwhile, Jourdan in the following letter ordered Bernadotte to retire slowly, so as to cover the right flank of the army :—

" 2 A.M., *21st August* 1796.

" I have just received your report of yesterday, and I send you a copy of the order. We have been fighting all day, and shall certainly be fighting all

[a] Lafosse, 97, 98.

to-morrow. Do not advance any farther until you hear from me. Watch the enemy closely, and, if you are obliged to retire, retreat upon Nuremberg; but do so in good order and as slowly as possible, so as not to uncover my right flank, and keep me informed of your operations. Correspond with Championnet by means of patrols, and try to communicate with the army of the Rhine and Moselle so as to discover where it is."[a]

Meanwhile, Bernadotte's letter to Moreau had reached General Delmas on the banks of the Danube, who had sent copies to Moreau and Desaix. But they were unable to co-operate or to make a diversion, or to offer any assistance. There are letters of Jourdan's of 22nd August to Generals Moreau and Bonnaud which show that the commander-in-chief felt anxiety about Bernadotte's position. In his letter to Moreau, Jourdan wrote that if the Archduke Charles should succeed in defeating Bernadotte at Teining, he (Jourdan) was in danger of having the lines of retreat and communication cut off.[a]

It was under these circumstances that Bernadotte was left alone, near Teining, with the odds nearly three to one against him.

On 21st August the advance guard of the Austrian army came into contact with Bernadotte's outposts, which, after an engagement, fell back on the main position on the heights of Teining. It would appear from Jomini's description that this position was a strong and well-selected one, but it is the opinion of that eminent writer that, with his superior numbers, the Archduke ought to have had no difficulty in annihilating Bernadotte and his division.[b]

On the 22nd of August the Archduke attacked Bernadotte, and throughout the whole day there

[a] Jourdan, *Campagne de 1796*, 312–314. [b] Jom. ix. 12.

was fought the battle of Teining, which was perhaps the best performance of Bernadotte's military career. We prefer to describe it in the words of an eye-witness, General Sarrazin, who took part in the battle, and has given the following account of the day, and of what led up to it:[a]—

"Jourdan having decided upon pursuing the Austrian army, ordered Bernadotte's division towards Ratisbon, to endeavour to establish a communication with Moreau. The Archduke Charles took a skilful advantage of the error, which Jourdan committed in not marching with the whole of his troops to form a junction with the army of the Rhine. The Archduke crossed the Danube with a chosen corps; his advanced guard attacked Bernadotte's outposts on the 21st of August, and forced them to retreat upon the main position of the division, encamped on the heights near the village of Teining. On the 22nd the Archduke attacked the French. The engagement was a sanguinary one, and success was diversified during the whole day. The village of Teining was taken and retaken several times; the streets were strewed with dead bodies, and towards the evening the village was set on fire, the enemy being persuaded that that was the only means of dislodging the troops which were entrenched in the houses. Meanwhile, the Archduke ordered his right wing to attack Bernadotte's left. The 88th Regiment of line infantry which was upon that point was obliged to retreat. Bernadotte's position became very critical, as the Austrians, by the advantage they had obtained, found themselves masters of the main road of Neumarkt, the only one by which the French could retreat. Convinced of the necessity of retaking the ground lost by his left, Bernadotte placed himself at the head of his reserve, consisting of a battalion of grenadiers of the 37th Regiment of line infantry, and of the 7th Regiment of dragoons, which composed a force of about four thousand strong. 'You know, my friends,' said the general to them, 'what care I have always taken of your

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* 22–24.

welfare, since I had the happiness of commanding such brave fellows as yourselves. The opportunity now presents itself of testifying your grateful sense of it, of deserving well of your country, and of covering yourselves with glory.'

"Although they had fought from daybreak, and it was then nearly night, these few words served to reanimate the soldiers, and caused them to forget the fatigues of the day. They all exclaimed, with the greatest enthusiasm, that they were ready to follow their general to the very bottom of hell. Bernadotte then gave orders to beat the charge, and marched in close column against the centre of the enemy's line who, staggered by the daring movement, though three times more numerous, made but a weak resistance, and retired in disorder to their former position. The Archduke, despairing of carrying Bernadotte's position by main force, ordered the firing to stop, and detached General Starray's division, threatening to turn the left of the French, whilst the columns of cavalry scoured the country upon the right, pushing the light troops towards Neumarkt. These movements occasioned Bernadotte well-founded anxiety as regards his line of operations, and at ten o'clock in the evening of the same day he retreated to Neumarkt."

The night march after the battle of Teining was marked by an incident which deserves to be told in the words of the same eye-witness:—

"During this march an accident occurred, which, with less disciplined troops, might have been attended with the most fatal consequences. Towards midnight a howitzer caisson took fire, in the centre of the column. There was a succession of explosions, similar to the running fire of artillery. The troops in the van and in the rear, conceiving the centre attacked, formed themselves in battle array, as if exercising, loudly requiring to be led forward to the enemy. I have often heard Bernadotte say that this confidence of the troops, notwithstanding the darkness of the night and the great losses they had experienced in the affair of the day, would always appear to him as the most pleasing moment of his life. The Arch-

BERNADOTTE AT THE BATTLE OF TEINING, AUGUST 1796.

After a print of the period.

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duke Charles had under his command twenty-five thousand men; Bernadotte had less than ten thousand. It is evident that, with proper ability and boldness, not one Frenchman would have escaped, particularly considering the nature of the ground around Neumarkt, which is a vast plain, and the great superiority of the Austrian cavalry, which was four to one."

Jourdan was severely blamed for ordering the movement which led to the battle of Teining. With his usual candour, he does justice, in his memoirs, to Bernadotte, of whom he says that "with a handful of men" he held his position and inflicted loss on the enemy;[a] and, in his despatch of 24th August, he reported to the Government that, on this occasion, Bernadotte had given "fresh proofs of his talents and his courage."[b]

On the next day the fighting was resumed, with the following result:[c]—

"On the 23rd, the whole of the Austrian cavalry poured upon the plain of Neumarkt, preceded by a numerous artillery. After a hot and destructive fire, Bernadotte did not think fit to await the general attack, which the Archduke took a considerable time in preparing. This slowness saved Bernadotte, who had committed a mistake in not quitting Neumarkt previous to the Archduke's arrival. The retreat was made in very good order: Bernadotte protected it at the head of three regiments of cavalry. Prince Charles manœuvred as though he had been unacquainted with the force opposed to him. The day of the 22nd, in which Bernadotte had supplied the defect of number by his ability and resolution, had induced the belief that our troops were more numerous than they really were."

[a] Jourdan, *Campagne de 1796*, 123.

[b] *Moniteur*, 4th Sept. 1796.

[c] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 23.

The fight lasted all day. Captain Français, then serving in the right wing of the French army, heard the distant cannonading, and tells us that it lasted until nightfall.[a]

Bernadotte had intended to retreat towards Nuremberg, but he found the road blocked by the enemy and had to change his plan and turn away to the right. Accordingly, he retired by way of Berg until he reached Lauf, and secured his position behind the river Pegnitz. It was necessary, however, to prevent the enemy advancing beyond Nuremberg, and Bernadotte employed the night in making an expedition in that direction, in which, by a lively cannonade, he informed his friends of the garrison of Nuremberg of his presence, and stopped the enemy from a further advance. On the following day, 24th August, he repelled an attack of General Hotze, and retreated at night to Forchheim, on the river Wiesent. An Austrian force under General Starray was on the Nuremberg-Forchheim road; but he succeeded in keeping them at bay. Meanwhile Generals Championnet and Grenier had established themselves at Forchheim, and in this way Bernadotte, upon 27th August, got into touch with the main body of the army, which had begun to retreat, having abandoned the forward movement towards the Bohemian frontier.

The historian of the army of Sambre and Meuse[b] describes the battle of Teining and its consequences as "a glorious combat and a slow retreat." How steady had been the retirement in the face of overwhelming numbers is proved by comparing time and distance. In seven days the retreating force had covered a distance of about forty English miles, dis-

[a] Capitaine Français, 133. [b] Desprez.

puting every inch of the ground with an enemy which outnumbered his forces in the proportion of three to one.[a]

It is only natural that the retreat from Ratisbon was seized upon by the people and Government of France as a bright spot in an otherwise disastrous campaign. Barras, who was the principal director and head of the Executive Government at the time, in describing the misfortunes that had occurred, says: "The rest of the campaign would have been still more disastrous had it not been for the intrepid resistance made to the Austrians by Bernadotte, the general of the vanguard, who had become the general of the rear-guard. During this retreat, as skilful as it was daring, Bernadotte drew upon himself for the resources which it was necessary to improvise in order to meet events unforeseen by the general-in-chief. On this most critical occasion Bernadotte displayed skill and resourcefulness which some day, applied on a larger scale, will reveal to Europe one of its greatest generals. May France preserve to its glory the generous soldiers who are now springing from the bosom of the soil of liberty! Foreign and French military men said at the time that there was something of Xenophon in Bernadotte."[b] Barras in this tribute of praise probably included some further events in the retreat which we have not yet reached; but the most critical and difficult part of Bernadotte's task was over.

Probably seldom in history has so small a force held its own for so long a time against such overwhelming odds. The Austrian memoirs of the campaign describe his resistance as an obstinate one; and by stating that the Archduke's superiority of numbers

[a] Desprez, 67. [b] Barras, ii. 155; (E.) ii. 186.

seemed to assure him the victory, appear to admit that the Archduke ought to have done better than he did with the numbers which he had at his disposal.[a]

It may be doubted whether Bernadotte at any stage of his military career—whether as General of the Revolution, Marshal of the Empire, or Crown Prince of Sweden—carried out any operation more successfully than his retreat from Ratisbon and his rear-guard action at Teining.

A characteristic of Bernadotte was that he was able to exemplify his native power of "bluff" in his manner of manœuvring his troops. He is frequently found concealing his numerical weakness from the enemy by presenting a bold front, or, to use Jomini's phrase, already quoted, overawing them "par sa bonne contenance." In the retreat from Ratisbon he was particularly successful in thus misleading the enemy. A French writer says that the Austrian army "manœuvred as if it had the whole French army before it. If it had dared, it would have overwhelmed the French."[b] It did not dare, because it never realised the weakness of the little force which was being handled with such apparent confidence.

Thiers, who is not always quite fair to Bernadotte, admits that on this occasion he made an honourable resistance to superior numbers, and severely criticises Jourdan for having so uselessly compromised this small corps.[c]

[a] Archduke Charles, chap. xvii. [b] *France militaire.*

[c] Thiers, iv. 451, 452.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE RETREAT TO SCHWEINFURT AND THE BATTLE OF WÜRZBURG

AUGUST 27–SEPTEMBER 11, 1796

"Le Général Colaud n'étant plus en état de supporter les fatigues de la campagne reçut l'autorisation de se retirer pour soigner sa santé; . . . Kléber devait conserver le commandement de . . . l'aile gauche, mais sa santé ne lui permit pas de continuer ses services. . . . Bernadotte ayant annoncé au général en chef, qu'il était obligé de s'éloigner momentanément de l'armée, pour soigner sa santé, le général de brigade Simon prit le commandement de sa division."—JOURDAN'S *Mémoires de la Campagne de 1796*, part ii. chap. ii., Paris 1818, pp. 152–156.

BERNADOTTE'S stubborn retreat came to an end on 27th August, upon which day he rejoined the main army on the plains of Forchheim. He had sustained an injury to his forehead; and both he and his troops were worn out with fighting and fatigue. If ever men had earned rest, they had done so. But they found the main army in a critical position. The Austrians were in possession of the road which led from Bamberg to Schweinfurt and thence to Würzburg; and it was essential to open this road, and keep it open, if the French army was to effect its retreat to the Rhine. Bernadotte was at once employed upon this duty, which occupied him for a week after his junction with Jourdan.[a]

In order to clear the road to Würzburg, it was necessary to make sure of Bamberg, of the wooded heights of Burg Ebrach, and of Schweinfurt; and for this purpose two rivers had to be crossed, the

[a] Jourdan, *Campagne de 1796*, 142.

Regnitz and the Main. On 28th August he sent from Forchheim a detachment, which succeeded in clearing the enemy out of Bamberg. On the 29th he crossed the Regnitz, and manœuvred to drive the enemy out of Burg Ebrach on the main road from Bamberg to Würzburg. Here the troops, which were to have supported him, failed to come up in time, owing to a change of route taken by Kléber, who at this period was in open disagreement with the commander-in-chief. Bernadotte, after a heavy engagement, found himself unsupported, and was obliged to fall back in the direction of Bamberg. He then took up his position in the forest of Dunkig, which commanded Burg Ebrach, and waited there, until the expected supports arrived at night. On the following day, 30th August, he crossed the Main and advanced on Zeil; and on the 31st he established himself in the environs of Schweinfurt.[a]

General Sarrazin gives the following description of the engagement at Burg Ebrach, the tone of which marks the growing dissatisfaction of the army with the commander-in-chief, Jourdan, who after three years of hard fighting was beginning to lose nerve and prestige:—

"General Jourdan came down at length from the mountains, with the forty thousand men, whom he had so unskilfully conducted thither. He joined us on the 27th, in the plain of Forchheim. On the 29th, Bernadotte was ordered to overthrow the Austrian corps, which had possessed itself of the great road from Bamberg to Würzburg. . . . Many brilliant attacks of infantry and cavalry took place, but without any decisive success. Loevener's regiment of light horse had succeeded in beating a battalion of the 37th Regiment. Bernadotte, who had an eye to everything, foreseeing this event, had despatched

[a] Jourdan, *Campagne de 1796*, 143–147.

the third regiment of mounted chasseurs to their aid. The Austrians were attacked at the very moment that they were going to cut to pieces the battalion of the 37th Regiment, which they had routed. The commandant of the mounted chasseurs, called Gros Jean, a lieutenant-colonel, very skilful in his profession, seeing the Austrian officers of the light horse stationed before the ranks, . . . gave the order, 'Rush upon the Austrian officers, who are covered with gold.' The struggle was severe, but in three minutes Loevener's regiment was overpowered, although more numerous than the chasseurs. Almost all the officers were killed. Bernadotte, an eye-witness of this engagement, was so delighted with it that he galloped up to the regiment, returned his thanks, and promoted Gros Jean to the rank of colonel upon the field of battle."[a]

Jomini says of Bernadotte's fight at Burg Ebrach that although, on account of the supports not coming up, it failed in its object, it was a very useful day's work, because it drew away the enemy from the Schweinfurt-Bamberg road, and opened the way to Schweinfurt for General Jourdan.[b]

The generals of the army of the Sambre and Meuse had for two years been cordially united in the brotherhood of arms, and in loyalty to the commander-in-chief, General Jourdan. Jourdan was on particularly friendly terms with Kléber, who ranked as his principal lieutenant. A rift became observable in the summer of 1796,[c] and widened until, in August, their relations ceased to be harmonious. Kléber freely criticised Jourdan's errors of judgment, and reproached him with being responsible for the reverses which had befallen the army. Jourdan is found, in his memoirs of the campaign, complaining of Kléber's failure to support him, and in particular attributing to him inconceivable remissness (" une lenteur incon-

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 81, 82; ib. *Mém.* 56.

[b] Jomini, ix. 22 n.

[c] See p. 138 *supra*.

cevable") on 29th August when he failed to reinforce Bernadotte at Burg Ebrach. In some places it is stated that matters went so far that Jourdan took steps to place Kléber under arrest; and that Kléber, losing patience, ended by refusing to serve under Jourdan.[a] It is difficult to disentangle facts from gossip. At all events, there was an open notorious disagreement between the general-in-chief and his second in command.[b]

The disagreement between Jourdan and Kléber came to a head when Jourdan, on his arrival at Schweinfurt, made a sudden change in his plan of retreat. Instead of continuing to retire towards the Rhine, he resolved to give battle at Würzburg. Military critics are almost unanimous in the opinion that this resolution was utterly unjustifiable from a military point of view. Jourdan was in a position of great difficulty. Attached to his head-quarters was a Representative of the People, Joubert de l'Hérault, who shadowed the general in the double capacity of spy and task-master, and declared that the Government and public opinion would condemn him if he did not strike a blow.

A council of war was held at Schweinfurt on 1st September, when Jourdan declared his intention of giving battle at Würzburg. A lively debate ensued. Jourdan was supported by Joubert de l'Hérault. Kléber led the opposition. He reproached Jourdan with having missed many opportunities of attacking the enemy when separated, and denounced the folly of returning to attack them now when they were united. Kléber's views appear to have been shared by General Ernouf, the chief of the staff, and also by Generals Bernadotte, Colaud, and Championnet.

[a] *Kléber*, par Reaulx, 103. [b] De Reiset, 47, 48.

In fact, there was practical unanimity among the generals that the resolution was a reckless one ; and we know from the journal of Captain Français that the whole army was of the same opinion.

On the same or the following day, Kléber, Bernadotte, and Colaud were relieved of duty on the ground of ill-health.[a] In the case of more than one of these generals, it was regarded, in some quarters, as a suspicious coincidence that they should have retired at this moment. One writer says, "They were indisposed, it is true ; but it was against the general-in-chief."[b] In the Archduke's memoirs Colaud's retirement was attributed to a difference with Jourdan, who in his memoirs contradicted the statement. In Bonnal's *Life of Ney* it is stated that both Kléber's and Colaud's ill-health was a pretext, and that their absence was due to disapproval of Jourdan's strategy.[c] These writers do not make any such suggestion in the case of Bernadotte. He was known to have been fighting rear-guard actions against superior numbers every day for a fortnight, and the injury to his forehead was visible to every eye.

General Sarrazin, however, in the following passage, tells us that Bernadotte identified himself with Kléber :[c]—

"Jourdan, who knew of my connection with Kléber and Bernadotte, sent for me, and requested me to represent to those two generals how much their absence would hurt the service in the operations he had resolved upon, and that he besought them, in the name of friendship and of their love of their country, to assist him with their talents and their experience. I acquitted myself of this commission, and as I had foretold Jourdan, my attempts were unsuccessful. Kléber said 'that it was necessary to leave some

[a] Jourdan, *Campagne de 1796*, 152–156.
[b] *Revue de la Révolution*, i. 122. [c] *Ney*, Bonnal, 86.

troops at Schweinfurt, and that he should take the command of them.' Bernadotte answered me 'that he was unwell, a very large lump having formed on his forehead.' He added 'that they were leading us to certain slaughter; that he loved his troops too well to be able to resolve to see them perish, the victims of ignorance and caprice; and that, with respect to me, he took a final farewell, despairing of ever seeing me again, as I should either be killed or conducted to a Bohemian prison.' When I gave Jourdan an account of my mission, he answered very angrily, 'Ah! ah! these gentlemen want to make themselves of consequence; but I will show them that I can gain battles without them!' The representative of the people, who was present, exclaimed, 'Let us march upon the enemy, and reply by victories to the observations of the rivals of *our* glory.' It was with difficulty that I refrained from laughing aloud at the impudent sally of the lawyer Joubert."[a]

The battle of Würzburg was fought and lost on the 2nd and 3rd of September, and Bernadotte did not return to duty until the 11th. His reception is described in the following terms by Sarrazin:—

"The soldiers received him with acclamations of joy, as a beloved father. The officers behaved more coldly, as they saw with regret that he withdrew himself from them on a critical occasion, in which he could have rendered great service, had he been able to have subdued his self-love by forgetting a slight indisposition, and partaking the dangers of his soldiers, whose inconveniences would have been much diminished by his talents."[a]

If blame attaches to Bernadotte for his absence from Würzburg, it attaches in at least the same degree to Kléber. But, in Bernadotte's case there is a temptation to find a parallel in his absence, ten years later, in July 1806, from the battle of Auerstädt, which has been attributed, in many quarters, to jealousy of

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 83–86; *Guerres de 24 ans*, 475, 476; *Mémoires*, 57.

Davoût, or to an unwillingness to spend himself for Davoût's glory.

Sarrazin appears to be the only writer who suggests that Bernadotte could have led his division in the field at Würzburg. In forming a judgment on the incident, it should be remembered that Sarrazin, although a competent witness, is not by any means reliable, where he is indulging in suspicions about other men's motives of action;[a] and that Jourdan and Joubert, whose policy Bernadotte opposed, have both told the story of the battle, and of all that preceded and followed it; and have both spoken of Bernadotte's action throughout the campaign in terms of unbroken praise.

Perhaps a fair inference from the evidence, so far as Bernadotte is concerned, may be, that, while his indisposition fully justified his absence from the battle,[b] yet those who, like Sarrazin, knew him well, and had served under him so recently in many a dangerous enterprise, were to be excused for supposing that, if he had been himself commander-in-chief, or if he had been in agreement with the commander-in-chief, even a more serious injury might not have kept him away. He knew, as well as others, how to fight when sick or wounded. Augereau had himself strapped to his horse at Eylau; and a couplet, in Rostand's *L'Aiglon*, serves to remind us that Masséna at Wagram directed his troops from his carriage:

> "On se bat, on se bat, MacDonald se dépêche,
> Et Masséna blessé passe dans son calèche."

Bernadotte was as impervious to fatigue or fear as any of his contemporaries, very few of whom could lead

[a] See note (18) on Sarrazin in Appendix.

[b] Sarrazin refers to it in two places as "*une forte tumeur qui lui était sortie au milieu du front*" (*Mémoires*, 57; *Phil.* ii. 83–86).

vanguards with greater daring, or handle rear-guards with a better blend of audacity and caution. But he did not always follow the rule that, when a soldier receives a call, he should never stop to ask the reason why, but should render an unhesitating and unquestioning obedience. The influence and example of Kléber, whose "military pupil"[a] he was, encouraged this tendency. When his confidence in his superiors was shaken, or his reason was unconvinced, Bernadotte's energies and enthusiasm slackened; and that chord of self was sometimes struck, which, in the diapason of human action and endeavour, can mar the noblest music.[b] This side of his character has been commented on, perhaps too severely, by Count Philippe de Ségur.(20)

Bernadotte employed the period of convalescence in collecting stragglers, and forming them into a corps. Upon his return to the army his peculiar powers of reanimating his troops and of conciliating the peasantry of the surrounding country were vigorously exerted, and their good effect is acknowledged in the memoirs of his comrades in arms.[c]

[a] Barras, iii. 92; (E.) ii. 117.

[b] The author has found some difficulty in investigating this incident. In some works, which are usually accurate, Bernadotte is represented as having commanded his division at Würzburg. Elsewhere his absence is attributed to his indisposition, which was of a kind observable by everyone. Sarrazin's suggestion that he might have taken part in the battle does not appear to have been noticed, but cannot be passed over.

[c] *Championnet*, 84, 85; Bricard, 245, 246.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE RETREAT FROM WÜRZBURG—THE DEATH OF MARCEAU

SEPTEMBER 11–18, 1796

"Go, my comrade, . . . do not let me see, before I die, my troops forced to retire in disorder. The mere idea kills me."—*Marceau's dying words to Bernadotte, 19th September* 1796.

WHEN Bernadotte returned to duty on 11th September, he found his division, forming with Marceau's the right wing of the army, which was stationed along the river Lahn from its confluence with the Rhine to Giessen.[a]

During the first few days after his arrival, Bernadotte was engaged in assisting and reinforcing Marceau,[b] and there is a letter of 13th September from Bernadotte to the general-in-chief, describing a reconnaissance, in which he and General Marceau took part. In the course of this reconnaissance, Marceau, wearing a hussar's uniform to conceal his rank, actually rode up to the enemy's outposts and entered into conversation with an officer, obtaining thereby some important information. There is also a letter from Marceau to Jourdan, dated 13th September, describing an attack by the Austrians, which was repulsed by Bernadotte and himself against superior numbers.

Jourdan now made a mistake, which increased the dissatisfaction of his army, and deepened the distrust of his capacities, which was shared by both the generals and the troops. He called Berna-

[a] *Moniteur*, 20th Sept. 1796. [b] *Marceau*, par Maze, 364.

dotte away from his right, and sent him to strengthen the left of the line, with the result that Marceau was left to sustain a severe engagement against a superior force of the enemy. He then recalled Bernadotte to the assistance of Marceau, who had, in the meantime, retired as the result of Jourdan's first mistake. When Bernadotte arrived (17th September) before Limburg, he found, to his astonishment, not his friend Marceau, whom he came to assist, but the Austrians in full force on the plains before Limburg. The position of the whole army became a critical one, the right wing having retreated, and the centre being consequently exposed to immediate danger. What occurred is thus described in the words of Jomini :—

"Bernadotte resolved to engage the enemy in order to give time to the French army to retire, and he fought with much bravery until midday. It was only then that he retired and was hotly pursued. He was again attacked at Mehrenberg by the enemy's vanguard, and continued fighting until eight o'clock in the evening, when his division took up their position at Waldenbach. He thus held his ground for the day, and enabled Marceau to retake the faubourgs of Limburg, and the left and centre of the army to make good their retreat that night."[a]

Jourdan, in his memoirs of the campaign of 1796, and elsewhere, applies the epithet "intrepide" to Bernadotte's action on this occasion; and Desprez, the historian of the army of Sambre and Meuse, says that "il fit bonne contenance," an expression frequently used in military books and despatches to convey an idea of Bernadotte's power of presenting a confident front when in a disadvantageous position.[b]

[a] Jomini, ix. 36. [b] Jourdan, *Campagne de 1796*, 200; Desprez, 83.

It will be observed that Bernadotte here, as at Teining, was holding his ground all day in order to save the rest of the army. The charge of *mauvaise camaraderie* has sometimes been brought against Bernadotte. It cannot, however, be denied that, at this period of his military career, whenever he was, so to speak, "on his own," no general of his time was more tenacious in covering a colleague's advance or retreat. All his best performances in the German campaigns were of that kind.

On the following day, 18th September, Marceau made a similar resistance, slowly retiring to Freilengen; and these two days' fighting by the right wing enabled the left and centre of the army to unite forces. This retiring movement, carried out by Bernadotte and Marceau, was gravely embarrassed by the latter's right flank having been uncovered by the sudden retreat of General Castelverd. In letters of 17th and 18th September both Marceau and Bernadotte complain of Castelverd's retirement, which seems to have been a serious and unexplained mistake.[a]

The following letter to Marceau, the date of which is not fixed with certainty, illustrates the comradeship between the writer and Marceau:—

"VEILBURG.

"My presentiment, my dear General, has, alas! been verified. They would not attend to our warnings. We, at all events, cannot be blamed. I left my regiment of infantry two leagues from Limburg, on the main road leading to Veilburg. It is posted between Allendorf and Wiesbaden. If you are in want of men, make use of all or any part of it. I am writing to General Simon, and am directing him to send you a hundred or a hundred and fifty cavalry, which I shall replace, if he lets me know that you

[a] *Marceau*, par Parfait, 236, 237; Jourdan, *Campagne de 1796*, 347.

require them. Farewell, my dear General. Be assured that whatever good fortune attends you will give me the keenest pleasure.—Salut et fraternité,

" J. BERNADOTTE.

" P.S.—I have found the enemy within pistol-shot of the town. Our vedettes are so near each other that they could shake hands."[a]

We now come to the day—one of the saddest in French military history—of the death of General Marceau, who, at the age of twenty-seven, was already one of the most distinguished generals in the French army. It is characteristic of Marceau's chivalrous character that he had abstained from joining in the dispute with Jourdan, although there is reason to infer that he disapproved of his plan of action as strongly as any of his colleagues.

On the 19th September Bernadotte and Marceau continued to retire slowly and steadily, in order to cover the retreat of the rest of the army, and took up positions near Altenkirchen. Marceau, with his reserve of cavalry, bivouacked behind the centre of his position. It was Marceau's last bivouac; for it was here that he was shot by a Tyrolese soldier, who fired at him from the cover of a neighbouring wood.

Bernadotte was one of the first to gallop to the side of his young comrade. Marceau-Sargent, the brother-in-law and the biographer of Marceau, thus describes the last conversation between him and Bernadotte.[b] Marceau, taking Bernadotte's hand, said: "Go, my comrade, to perish for others' faults. We shall never meet again. But do not let me see, before I die, my troops forced to retire in disorder. The mere idea kills me." "No, my dear friend," replied Bernadotte, "you will not have that

[a] *Marceau*, par Parfait, 390. [b] Marceau-Sargent, 47.

TWO PORTRAITS OF GENERAL MARCEAU.

"A brave soldier and a chivalrous gentleman"—killed in September 1796.

"A hussar of the Revolution with a face like Robert Louis Stevenson" (see page 79).

To face page 166.

chagrin. So long as the troops are under your eyes, they will defend themselves with courage. Be calm. The retreat has been carried out in good order."[a] Marceau had to be left on the field of battle, and was treated with respect and tender care by the Austrians. He died upon 21st September. The Archduke Charles sent his remains to Neuwied escorted by Austrian cavalry, and asked to have notice of the day of his funeral, so that the Austrian army might join in paying respect to his memory. Albert Sorel truly says that "Marceau's funeral recalls the finest traits of the ages of chivalry, for the same respect was paid to the same virtues."[b]

Bernadotte, at a later date, finding himself military governor of Coblenz, had the funeral urn opened, and sent some of Marceau's ashes to his sister Emira, who distributed them to members of his family. In 1892 these ashes were still preserved in several places.[c]

In the week preceding Marceau's death, Jourdan had proposed to unify the command, on the Lower Lahn, under Marceau or Bernadotte; but, out of deference to each other, both generals refused the post.[d] Save for a brief misunderstanding, for which Marceau-Sargent blames Sarrazin, their relations, since their first meeting in May 1794, had been intimate and cordial.

[a] *Marceau*, par Parfait, 244, 245; *Le Mort de Marceau*, par Hardy, 14.

[b] Sorel, i. 170.

[c] *Marceau*, par Parfait, 453.

[d] Marceau-Sargent, 63; *Championnet*, 85.

CHAPTER XXX

JOURDAN'S RECALL—BERNADOTTE'S REPUTATION AT ITS ZENITH

"Everybody knows that you are an honest man, a brave soldier, and a good citizen; but it is for the public interest that the Government should know that you are incapable of successfully commanding-in-chief even four men and a corporal."—*Bernadotte to Jourdan, October 1796.*

AFTER Marceau's death the army recrossed the Rhine; and General Jourdan was relieved of his command. The change was in accordance with Jourdan's wishes. He had lost the confidence of his army, and he had lost confidence in himself.[a] After the council of war at Schweinfurt, when his plans were opposed by Kléber and his other divisional generals, he wrote to the Government:—

"I feel it my duty to inform you that the interests of the public service make it desirable that I should cease to command the army of Sambre and Meuse, because I have lost the confidence of my generals, who no longer regard me as capable of acting as their chief."[b]

This was a plain, unvarnished statement of the position, as simple and modest as the writer himself. He wrote again on 25th September from Cologne:—

"For five years I have had the honour to serve the Republic in different ranks. I have done my best to do my duty. I know not by what chance I was raised to the rank of general of brigade, and then to that of general-in-chief. Nobody has ever seen me seek promotion, and I have always declared that I was unworthy to hold so important a position."[b]

[a] Desprez, 87. [b] *Ney*, par Bonnal, 86, 91.

In their attitude towards Jourdan, on the occasion of his recall, Kléber and Bernadotte acted together, as they had done throughout. It is evident that they were convinced that Jourdan's usefulness was at an end, and that his continuance as commander-in-chief was a danger to the army and to the country. When Jourdan received from the Directory the order for his recall, he called the generals together in the castle of Hakenburg, and requested them to forward a certificate to the Government. Kléber and Bernadotte refused to join in doing so. Sarrazin says that, when Bernadotte came to give his opinion, he gave vent to the indignation which the loss of so many of his best troops, owing to the commander-in-chief's blunders, had occasioned him, and went so far as to say: "Everybody knows that you are an honest man, a brave soldier, and a good citizen; but it is for the public interest that the Government should be made aware that you are incapable of successfully commanding-in-chief even four men and a corporal."[a]

Kléber and Bernadotte were probably apprehensive that a testimonial from them might have led to the reappointment of Jourdan at a moment when, from loss of nerve and reputation, he had ceased to be capable of leading men. To contribute to any such result would have been an abuse of friendship and of personal loyalty. At the same time, there is a harshness of tone about this Gascon speech, which makes one hope that Sarrazin, writing many years after the event, may not have reported him quite correctly. Sarrazin adds that, although they refused to sign the certificate, Kléber and Bernadotte afterwards repaired this omission beyond Jourdan's expectations.

It may be inferred that Bernadotte exerted himself

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 87, 88.

in some other way to set Jourdan right with the Government. At all events, no scar remained on either side to remind them of this quarrel. They met again in 1799, and acted together with cordiality, both in war and in politics. Jourdan has left several works giving an account of his military and political experiences, and he loses no opportunity of expressing his regard and admiration for Bernadotte.

Bernadotte, at the end of these three years' campaigning in Belgium and on the Rhine, had reached the zenith of his military reputation. In later years his prestige declined, for reasons which it would be outside the scope of this volume to discuss; and when he fought against Napoleon, the Emperor went so far as to say that he had only been the twentieth of his generals. But, in 1796, Bernadotte was recognised as one of the best divisional commanders of the day.

In the following passage Barras tells us the information which the Government had on the subject, and the view which they took in October 1796:—

"Joubert, who comes straight from the army, is received at a sitting of the Directorate. He declares that Jourdan has not preserved his steadiness; that he has all but lost his wits. He says that Jourdan is a general who no longer has a firm seat in his saddle, since the fear of the Committee of Public Safety no longer sits behind him. The same may be said of other commanders-in-chief, but the army of Sambre and Meuse may once more march to victory. It has not lost more than 6000 men, while the great divisional commanders, such as Lefèbvre, Kléber, and Bernadotte, possess and deserve the confidence of the soldiers. They will yet make heroes of them."[a]

It appears that Barras wished to have Kléber or Bernadotte appointed to the chief command

[a] Barras, ii. 214; (E.) ii. 260.

in succession to Jourdan. Kléber was unwilling to accept a chief command; other employment was in store for Bernadotte; and the choice fell on Beurnonville. Immediately on his appointment Beurnonville wrote to Kléber, on 21st September, that in view of Marceau's loss the only thing to be done was to send Bernadotte into the Hunsrück.

Before the end of the year Bernadotte successfully defended the bridge of Neuwied from an attack by General Kray; and towards the end of October he helped, for a second time, to drive the Austrians across the river Nahe, and forced them to retire to Mainz.[a] These operations terminated his active service in the army of Sambre and Meuse, of which General Zurlinden has said that Bernadotte "served brilliantly on the Rhine in the army of Jourdan."[b]

[a] *Victoires, Conquêtes*, viii. 4. [b] Zurlinden, 61.

CHAPTER XXXI

WINTER QUARTERS AT COBLENZ, 1796

OCTOBER–DECEMBER 1796

"I admit that you might be happy for a month in your rural life, but no sooner would you hear the sound of the drums of the National Guards, than recollections dear to your heart would make you regret the army. . . . We have for three years fought together in the same ranks; I always felt a brother's tenderness for you; and, as a sincere friend, I request you to continue with us."—*Kléber dissuading Bernadotte from retiring on half-pay, November* 1796.

DURING the winter of 1796 Bernadotte remained on the left bank of the Rhine in command of 20,000 men, with head-quarters at Coblenz.

At Coblenz he made the acquaintance of the family of a rich banker named Potgeisser, meeting him and his two daughters at their own home, and at the house of a common friend, Count Boos. French and German writers seem to agree that one of the banker's daughters went very near becoming Queen of Sweden. Bernadotte's staff officer expresses the opinion that Bernadotte was deterred from matrimony by disparity in years, as the young lady was eighteen and the general was thirty-three; and by the inequality in their fortunes, for the general had nothing except his pay.[a] A German writer gives a patriotic colour to the incident :—

"Whether Trantchen with the brown eyes like a doe, or Lischen with the blond tresses, was the more charming was hard to decide. Neither was it worth while to attempt it, as the father made no secret of the fact that he would never give one of his daughters to a French officer. Bernadotte had therefore to console himself with the knowledge that both preferred him to all other admirers."[b]

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* 88, 89 [b] Hans Kloeber, 68.

It was at this period that Bernadotte's peace of mind was seriously disturbed by an accusation, which was levelled against him in a Paris newspaper by one Duperron, of having, in the recent campaign, plundered and exacted contributions from the people of Nuremberg. As a matter of fact, the burgomasters of that city had offered him a considerable sum of money, and it had been conveyed to him that the Austrian and Prussian generals were in the habit of accepting such *douceurs*. Bernadotte had replied "that everyone was master of his own actions, and that the only reward he required of the city magistrates, in return for keeping his troops in good discipline, was that they would pay the greatest attention to his sick and wounded."

It is probable that this libel had no better foundation than Bernadotte's gasconading reply to the professors of the University of Nuremberg, who protested against his officers being billeted upon their houses at Altdorf.[a] At all events, the aspersion caused him the deepest pain and annoyance; and he wrote the following letter to the Directory, which was published in the *Moniteur* of the 20th Brumaire, An 5 (10th November 1796). Bernadotte's high-flown gasconisms are difficult to translate:—

"GENERAL OF DIVISION, BERNADOTTE,
to
THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORY.

"COBLENZ, *7th Brumaire, An* 5
(*28th October* 1796).

"CITIZEN DIRECTORS,—A certain Duperron has caused to be published in No. 22 of the *Messager du Soir* or *Gazette Générale de l'Europe* the most revolting calumnies. My regard for my honour (*ma delicatesse*) compels me to inform you of this fact and to

[a] See Chapter XXVI.

make my complaint to you, since, owing to your opportunities, you are able to make known the truth in the full light of day (*dans tout son éclat*).

"This Duperron alleges that the fine city of 'Nuremberg was for twenty-four hours given over to plunder, and that General Bernadotte, on entering it, exacted a contribution within a given number of hours; threatening in default to deliver the city over to the fury of his army.' He offers to produce mathematical proofs of his assertions. I shall not speak of the indignation shown by the military men, who know me, on hearing of this mendacious assertion. I shall say nothing of what the troops under my command, as well as the officers who lead them, have felt. But I must claim from you the just reparation which is due to me. So infamous a deed cannot remain unpunished, and I venture to hope that the Government will expose it in all its blackness (*toute la noirceure*).

"BERNADOTTE."[a]

In the same number of the *Moniteur* there is a letter of Bonaparte's written from Milan with reference to some Genoese question of the moment. The two letters reflect the difference between the temperaments of the two men. Side by side we see the cold conciseness of the Corsican and the high-flown rhetoric of the Gascon. Bonaparte would never have troubled himself to claim reparation from the Government for a calumnious paragraph in an evening newspaper.

The Directory did not, at first, take Bernadotte's complaint very seriously, and the latter resolved to relinquish a position which exposed him to such imputations. He asked to be allowed to retire on half-pay. The Directory refused to accept his retirement, and addressed to him a laudatory letter, in which they advised him to treat with silent contempt the unfounded reports of the enemies of his glory, and added that the Government "relied on his

[a] *Moniteur*, 10th November 1796.

talents and patriotism to continue ably serving his country."

General Sarrazin tells us that this letter did not by any means restore the equanimity of its recipient, and that it was Kléber who succeeded in dissuading him from leaving the army. He puts into Kléber's mouth the following observations, which he says were made to Bernadotte upon this subject. They exemplify Kléber's well-known indulgence in outspoken and sometimes exaggerated denunciation of all "the powers that be":—

"'If you return to France, my dear Bernadotte, with your frank disposition and love of justice, I foretell,' said Kléber, 'that you will perish before three months are over. Not only is the Government composed of five robbers, but every little village is governed by a mayor of the same stamp. Like master, like man. The secret police—which is, in regard to politics, what the science of mining is to the art of war—is confided to a set of scoundrels, who abuse their power to glut their vengeance, and to cause the most virtuous character to perish, or at least to suffer disgrace. In vain will you conduct yourself as an honest citizen: they will counterfeit your handwriting; they will accuse you of a traitorous correspondence of which you had never the least idea; and, through the perfidy of enemies, whom those envious of your merit will not fail to raise against you, all your fine projects of philosophy and retreat will only tend to cause you to perish on a scaffold as a traitor to your country, as was the case with Luckner, Custine, Beauharnais, Houchard, and many other brave military men. Our governors are lawyers, jealous of the glory of their generals; they are base, uninformed, proud, vindictive, and cruel—in a word, possess only a genius for doing evil. Their dominion cannot last long; Providence always, sooner or later, does justice on the wicked and recompenses the good. Await patiently that happy period in the bosom of your friends, and do not go and offer yourself up to

those tigers, thirsting for blood, who have for four years preyed upon the vitals of our unhappy country. I admit that you might be happy for a month in your rural life, but no sooner would you hear the sound of the drums of the National Guards, than recollections dear to your heart would make you regret the army. You were born to live in camps, and to die upon the field of battle. Do you really believe that the vociferations of the Jacobins of your village will not make you again wish to hear the acclamations of applause, with which your grenadiers have so often hailed the excellent manœuvres you have caused them to execute on the day of battle? . . . We have for three years fought together in the same ranks; I always felt a brother's tenderness for you; and, as a sincere friend, I request you to continue with us.'"[a]

Another conversation, of the same period, is related by Marceau's brother-in-law and biographer. A group of generals were met at Kléber's quarters at Coblenz. Bernadotte, who was peculiarly sensitive upon the subject of his good name and personal renown, complained that "many of their feats of arms were unrecorded and unknown beyond the spot where they had taken place; that many of them were misrepresented in France; and that deeds were frequently attributed to the wrong person." Kléber replied: "In a hundred years we shall be known in our fatherland, justice will be done to us, and each will be credited with what is due to him. Then history will set aside some who at present are leading the van." Kléber walked towards the window, which overlooked the Rhine, and pointing to the opposite banks, added: "It is there, my comrade, that the materials are collecting; it is there that historians will go to learn what we have done. Those are the people who are writing for us."[b]

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 90–92. [b] Marceau-Sargent, 19, 20.

After the portrait by Bonneville.

After the portrait by Levachez.[1]

After the portrait by Guérin.

After the portrait by Fauchery.

FOUR PORTRAITS OF GENERAL BERNADOTTE.

[1] The portrait by Levachez is of the period of the Consulate.

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Bernadotte's sister died on 15th October 1796, leaving his mother and elder brother, the only remaining members of his family. To return to Pau, and spend the remainder of his days with them, on a general's half-pay, was still the limit of his ambition. But he now received a fresh call of duty, which was to link his career with that of the greatest man of his time, and to open a path to amazing rank and fortune. From this starting-point, a progressive series of high employments, civil and military, lay before him; yet, we may be permitted to doubt whether he was ever to become, in the simplest sense of the term, a better or greater man.

If Bernadotte had fallen, like Marceau, in the German campaign of 1796, how different would be the legend associated with his memory! The same reflection is suggested by every remarkable career, in the path of which there occurs some sudden turn. The events leading up to our own revolution supply an example in the case of Wentworth. If Wentworth had died in 1627, he would be remembered in history with Pym and Eliot, as one of Hampden's fearless group, instead of standing apart, a tragical figure in Strafford's solitary niche. Similarly, if Bernadotte had died in 1796, his place to-day would not be among marshals, princes, and kings, but with Kléber, Marceau, and Desaix, as one of the single-minded soldiers of the army of the First Republic.

PART V

THE ARMY OF ITALY

JANUARY–APRIL 1797

"L'aigle ne marche pas, il vole, chargé des bandarolles de victoires suspendues à son cou et à ses ailes."—CHATEAUBRIAND, *Mémoires d'outre tombe*, i. 49 (writing of Bonaparte's campaigns in Italy).

"Bernadotte jeune, plein de feu, de vigueur, de belles passions, de caractère surtout, très estimable, il n'est pas aimé parce qu'il passe pour enragé; ses troupes les mieux tenues de l'armée."—*Journal du Voyage du Général Desaix* (1797), p. 70.

PART V

THE ARMY OF ITALY

JANUARY–APRIL 1797

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CHAPTER XXXII

BERNADOTTE IS SENT TO ITALY TO REINFORCE BONAPARTE—THE MARCH FROM COBLENZ TO MILAN

JANUARY–FEBRUARY 1797

"As to generals of division, I beg of you to send me none but distinguished officers, for our methods of warfare here are so different from all others, that I cannot trust a division to any general until I have tried him in two or three engagements."—*Bonaparte's demand for reinforcements, 20th January 1797.*

"The general of division, Bernadotte, who is conducting to you the troops . . . has already won from us proofs of our approval, and we hope that you will be able to report favourably of his services."—*The reply of the Directory, 4th February 1797.*

"An officer who is firm and capable of leading and electrising his troops."—*Kléber describing Bernadotte to General Moreau, 7th January 1797.*

"I espouse the glory of the army of Italy. I attach myself to that of its young general. I hope he may not be ungrateful."—*Bernadotte to General Kellermann, March 1797.*

THE scene now shifts to Northern Italy, where Bonaparte, having completed the brilliant campaign of 1796,—the campaign illuminated by the glory of Lodi, Castiglione, Arcola, and other victories,—was now eagerly awaiting reinforcements, without which he was unable to strike a decisive blow, or to venture upon the invasion of Austria.

His demands on the home Government had been frequent and forcible. On 14th November 1796 he had written to the Directory from Verona: "I am doing my duty and the army is doing its duty. My heart is broken, but my conscience is clear. Reinforcements! Send me reinforcements! But do not make game of me. I do not want reinforcements on

paper. I want them here now and under arms."[a] Can anyone picture General Jourdan adopting this tone towards the Executive Government? There is little wonder that the campaigns of Italy were made more interesting than those on the Rhine. On 6th December General Bonaparte wrote from Milan: "Send me 10,000 men from the Rhine, 10,000 men from the sea-coast, and 1500 cavalry;" and he adds that, if his requests are complied with, "you may expect millions, victories, and an advantageous peace."[a] On 28th December he wrote again to the same effect. The Directory at last gave way. Perhaps that dexterous suggestion of a harvest of "millions" had some weight.

Bonaparte now turned his attention to the personnel of the reinforcements. On 20th January he wrote to the Directory: "As to generals of division, I beg of you to send me none but distinguished officers, for our methods of warfare here are so different from all others, that I cannot trust a division to any general until I have tried him in two or three engagements."[a] On 4th February the Directory replied: "The general of division, Bernadotte, who is conducting to you the troops which have been despatched from the army of Sambre and Meuse, will remain in Italy under your orders. He has already won from us proofs of our approval, and we hope that you will be able to give a favourable report of his services."

Lavalette in his memoirs says that every officer was desirous of serving under General Bonaparte.[b] Bernadotte's appointment was helped by the recommendation of Kléber, who, in a letter to Moreau, dated 7th January 1797, wrote that he had supported

[a] *Corr. de N.* ii., Nos. 1182, 1235, 1402. [b] Lavalette, 115.

Bernadotte's selection, because it was necessary to have at the head of such a force "un officier ferme et capable de conduire et d'electriser une troupe."[a] The two friends were now separated, after having fought together since the spring of 1794.

Bernadotte's transfer to the army of Italy was a turning-point in his life. Thenceforward his experiences became more vivid and interesting, and his capacities rapidly developed. There is every reason to suppose that the appointment accorded with his own wishes. He was returning to the sunny south, which was more congenial to his nature, and more suitable to his constitution than the scenes of his recent service. He was leaving friends behind him, but the army of Sambre and Meuse was not what it had been. The "family" had been broken up by the death of Marceau and by the recall of Jourdan.

Bernadotte left Coblenz in January 1797. His force was nominally 20,000 strong, but probably did not contain 19,000 combatants. It consisted of two divisions, one from the army of Sambre and Meuse under his own immediate command, and the other from the army of Rhine and Moselle under the divisional command of General Delmas. He was joined at Metz by some outlying troops, including the 15th Regiment, commanded by Lahure, who tells us in his memoirs that "General Bernadotte enjoyed a distinguished reputation for courage and *coup d'œil* on the field of battle. He was adored by his soldiers on account of his solicitude for their health and comfort and the trouble which he took for their welfare."[b]

It was a long march from Coblenz to Metz, from Metz by Langres to Dijon, from Dijon to Lyons, from Lyons to Chambéry, from Chambéry and Modane

[a] *Kléber*, par Pajol, 258. [b] Lahure, 117.

across the Alps over Mont Cenis to Turin, then through Piedmont and Lombardy to Milan, and finally from Milan to Verona, and thence to Padua.[a] A glance at the map shows that the distance covered was not less than 600 English miles, probably a great deal more. The main difficulties, in French territory, were to maintain discipline, and to prevent desertion, in the case of soldiers who, after years of hard service, found themselves near their homes again. Bernadotte resorted to the bold plan of giving furlough to 6000 men, whose homes were within reasonable distance of the march, with orders to rejoin the army at points convenient to them. He took a risk in thus sending away nearly one-third of his army, but the step proved completely successful. Out of the 6000, only thirty failed to turn up at the appointed time and place, and they were bad characters of whom the army was well rid.[b]

But, if Bernadotte yielded to the desire of his soldiers to visit their homes, he also exemplified his habitual severity in the enforcement of discipline. Near Dijon, at the end of January, the murder of a peasant was brought home to a soldier. The general had the guilty party arrested and handed over to justice. Having given 800 francs, and collected 5000 francs for the family of the peasant, he seized the opportunity, in an address to his soldiers, of contrasting the conduct of the murderer with the honourable reputation of the army of Sambre and Meuse. The incident increased his influence with his troops, and created a favourable impression in the locality where the crime occurred.[c]

[a] Lahure, 118; Sarrazin, *Mémoires*, 60. [b] Lafosse, 120, 121.
[c] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 94, 95; ib. *Mémoires*, 62.

GENERAL BERTHIER.

Bonaparte's Chief of the Staff, who became a Marshal of France, Duke of Wagram, and Prince of Neuchâtel.

An enemy of Bernadotte's.

GENERAL KELLERMANN.

Who won the Battle of Valmy in 1792, and became a Marshal of France and Duke of Valmy.

A friend of Bernadotte's.

To face page 184.

[*These portraits are of the Empire period.*]

The Alps were crossed in the depths of winter. Captain Français in his journal tells us that the ascent of one peak occupied six hours, the descent four hours; and that on the summit the monks supplied the army with food and refreshment. No painter has represented Bernadotte crossing the Alps, but we may quote Alison's word-picture: "These brave men crossed the Alps in the depths of winter. In ascending Mont Cenis, a violent snowstorm arose. The guides recommended a halt, but the officers ordered the drums to beat, and they faced the tempest as they would have rushed on the enemy."[a]

Before leaving French territory, Bernadotte stayed with old General Kellermann (afterwards the Duke of Valmy), who was in command of the frontier station of Chambéry. After crossing the border, there might have been considerable danger, during the march to Milan, if the Austrians had been well informed, or if the Piedmontese had been resolute in taking up a hostile attitude.[b] But the intelligence department of the Austrian army, at this time and place, seems to have been singularly defective; and the King of Sardinia preferred to enter upon negotiations, which resulted in a treaty of offensive and defensive alliance.

The Milanese were astonished,—when the reinforcements filed into the Lombard city, after their long march, and after crossing the Alps in winter,—to observe their fine bearing, their smart uniforms, and their orderly behaviour, which presented a striking contrast to the comparatively wild ways and uncouth appearance of the soldiers of the army of Italy. This contrast was noticed by others besides the inhabitants of Milan. Lavalette tells us that "a refined polite-

[a] Alison, vi. 2. [b] Jomini, x. 21.

ness distinguished the general (Bernadotte) and his staff."[a] From the date of the entry of Bernadotte's troops into Milan, there commenced a jealousy and a rivalry between the old army of Italy and the new-comers from the Rhine, which had serious consequences for all concerned.

As evidence of these rising jealousies we may quote a passage from the memoirs of General Thiébault, who was at this time an officer in Masséna's army in Italy: "The old corps of the army of Italy, largely recruited in our southern provinces, claimed to be especially the 'citizens' army.' They called the army of the Rhine the 'gentlemen's army,' and they applied this nickname to Bernadotte's division as soon as it arrived from the Rhine. The unpopularity of that division was increased by the fact that its handsome appearance, its discipline, the respect of the men for the officers, formed a striking contrast with troops who recognised no duty but that of beating the enemy."[b]

These sectional disputes had little if anything to say to the coldness which, as time went on, grew up between Bonaparte and Bernadotte. Bonaparte was himself above all petty differences of that kind, although he is said to have encouraged them among his generals, as helping his path to domination. The following letter, written to General Kellermann on Bernadotte's arrival at head-quarters, offers strong evidence that the writer was entering upon his new duties with every intention of loyally serving his new commander-in-chief. For that purpose we introduce the letter here; although, in point of date, it would come in more fittingly in the next chapter:—

[a] Lavalette, 115. [b] Thiébault (Engl.), i. 325, 326.

" *Equality.* *Liberty.*

" PADUA, *the* 18 *Ventose, 5th year of the Republic* (*8th March* 1797).

" You are indulgent, my dear respected General. I beg of you to forgive my tardiness. My letter is overdue, but believe me that, although I have neglected writing to you, the remembrance of your kindness has not been effaced from my memory. I shall preserve it as long as I live, esteeming myself fortunate to have your friendship.

" I have nothing to complain of as regards my reception in the army. If I may judge by appearances, my service therein will be a pleasant one. Should it prove to be otherwise, I shall have learnt a lesson, and shall suffer heavily by my transfer; for I was, vanity apart, respected in the army of the Sambre and Meuse. I shall endeavour to gain the goodwill of my comrades. I shall turn to good advantage the advice which you were so kind as to give me, and I shall bow to fate in coming events, striving always to rise superior to them. I espouse the glory of the army of Italy. I attach myself to that of its young general. I hope he may not be ungrateful, for I have his happiness greatly at heart.

" I have not yet seen your son; I am hoping to make his acquaintance. Farewell, my brave General. Continue to grant me your friendship.

" J. B. BERNADOTTE."[a]

The same spirit seems to have animated Bernadotte's officers and men. Colonel Lahure says that the regiments of the army of Sambre and Meuse, one of which he was commanding, were proud to serve under Bonaparte, and were eager to emulate the achievements of the army of Italy, and to show themselves worthy of fighting in its ranks.[b]

[a] *Revue des Documents Historiques, Année VI.* 86, 87.

[b] Lahure, 118.

CHAPTER XXXIII

From Milan to Padua

February–March, 1797

"Have you forgotten that but for me you would be slaves working in the pestilential marshes of Hungary, instead of being soldiers in a victorious army? You shall either suffer the ignominy of having assassinated the general who has been a father to you, or I shall run my sabre through the body of every mutineer." — *Bernadotte's gasconade to the mutineers at Milan, February 1797.*

On the day of Bernadotte's arrival at Milan, there occurred the first of a series of incidents, which served to accentuate the nascent spirit of jealousy between the soldiers from the Rhine and those of the army of Italy. His troops were told that, instead of being billeted on the inhabitants, they were to be quartered in the deserted convents, where the only furniture was dirty straw, which had already served as bedding for Austrian prisoners. The medical officers declared that these quarters could not be occupied without serious danger to the health of the troops; and the regimental commanders at once reported the facts to Bernadotte.

Bernadotte was careful of the health and comfort of his troops; and thereby, although a severe disciplinarian, he won not only their respect, but also their affection. He at once ordered the Commandant of Milan, Colonel Dupuy, to alter his arrangements, and to billet the troops on the inhabitants. Colonel Dupuy, like many of his brother-officers in Bonaparte's army of Italy, had a supreme contempt for all other armies and for all other generals. He went to Bernadotte and told him in a slighting tone "that these convents had been found good enough for the citizens of the army

of Italy, and that consequently the gentlemen of the army of the Rhine might very well put up with them." Bernadotte answered that "he could dispense with such observations, and he would recommend him to execute promptly the orders he had given him to quarter the troops on the inhabitants." Dupuy replied "that he had his instructions from General Bonaparte, and he would make no alteration in them, until he had received the orders of the same general." Bernadotte hinted that he might be obliged to have him arrested. "Learn, I would have you to know, General," said Colonel Dupuy, "that I belong to the army of Italy, and that I am not to receive orders from you, a general of the army of the Rhine." At the same time he cast a furious glance at Bernadotte, dragging his sabre along the ground. The general replied in a calm, dignified tone: "The Republic has but one army, of which I am a general and you a colonel. I punish you conformably to the penal code, which is the same for the officers of the Rhine and of Italy. With regard to the petulance you very unseasonably exhibited, be well assured that my only regret is that you are not a general of division like myself, as I would then have given you a lesson you would not soon forget." Colonel Dupuy was himself a fiery Gascon, a noted duellist, and a gallant and popular officer; and his arrest served to embroil Bernadotte with Dupuy's friends.[a]

The next incident occurred on the day of the departure of Bernadotte's army from Milan. The 30th Regiment refused to march, claiming its pay, which was in arrears. The mutiny was so serious that the general of brigade, who happened to be General Friant, was unable to cope with it. Friant informed Berna-

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 95–97; and, for Colonel Dupuy, see Thiébault, i. 328, 334.

dotte, who galloped to the scene of the occurrence, and found the 30th Regiment resolute in their refusal to leave Milan without their pay. Bernadotte ordered them to march, and at the same time assured them that they would receive their pay on their arrival at Mantua. The regiment refused to budge an inch, and a grenadier, who was evidently a ringleader, was heard to exclaim that the only pay they had any chance of getting at Mantua would be "Austrian lead and iron."[a]

The moment was critical; and Bernadotte called into requisition the arts of quelling insubordination, which in 1794 had gained for him the title of "Jupiter Stator des mutins." In a voice of thunder, accompanied by dramatic gesticulation, he poured out the following gasconade: "Unhappy men, I would not have brought you so far, if I had ever dreamt I was to become a witness of your dishonour. The law authorises me to kill everyone who refuses to march against the enemy. You must obey me or assassinate me. But you will never strike the général to whom you owe your lives. Have you forgotten that but for me you would be slaves working in the pestilential marshes of Hungary, instead of being soldiers in a victorious army? You shall either suffer the ignominy of having assassinated the general who has been a father to you, or I shall run my sabre through the body of every mutineer." He then advanced to the first grenadier of the 30th Regiment and shouted, "March, or I will kill you." The grenadier happened, fortunately, to be an orderly character; and it is not impossible that the Gascon general knew his man, and selected him as a likely subject for his hypnotic oratory. At all events, the grenadier marched off like

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 97, 98; Lafosse, 123, 124.

a lamb; the next grenadiers followed; and the whole division proceeded on the march without a murmur and without their pay.

If we had not many undeniable proofs of similar scenes,[a] it would be difficult to believe that a general should have dealt with a mutiny in such a fashion; and we cannot be surprised to find that some of the other generals of the army of Italy criticised Bernadotte's methods of preserving discipline. The incident is twice related, with some slight variation of detail, in a book published in 1888, and devoted to examples of military eloquence;[b] and the scene in its main features is well authenticated. It is recorded by one of his officers who was present; and Bonaparte is said to have complimented him upon its successful issue. It must be admitted that Bernadotte never indulged in rhetoric for its own sake or without a sufficient cause, and always adapted the line of argument to the level of his hearers and the requirements of the emergency. On the present occasion, this torrential gasconade did not flow in vain. The ringleaders were given up, and marched in front of the army in disgrace; and order was completely restored.

After leaving Milan, Bernadotte pursued his march to Padua, passing through Mantua, Verona, and Porto Lignago. The latter place was designated as the depot of his division. Wherever his army appeared, their smartness and good conduct was admired.

The following observations, addressed by the Abbé de Pons, a Royalist spy, to the Comte de Provence, the exiled "King," inform us of the impression which Bernadotte's troops created upon a hostile witness:—

"The columns succeed each other daily in Piedmont. I made a secret expedition to satisfy myself

[a] Cf. Roch-Godard, 52. [b] *L'Eloquence militaire*, i. 288, 289.

upon the subject of this report. The army of reinforcement, commanded by Bernadotte, comprises an efficient corps of fine young troops (*effectivement composée de la plus belle jeunesse*). The column, which I saw, belongs to the division from the army of Sambre and Meuse, and comes from Coblenz. The soldiers march gaily, without any appearance of fatigue. I spoke to two subaltern officers. . . . They were very guarded in what they said. They seemed tired of the war, and only continue it because they feel bound to bring to a successful conclusion what they have commenced. This army crosses Piedmont without causing any trouble or making any depredation. Everything is done with a good discipline which is very surprising."[a]

While Bernadotte had been conducting his troops from Coblenz to Padua, Bonaparte had been paving the way to the Treaty of Tolentino. On 7th February he had written a letter to Bernadotte, addressed to the frontier town of Chambéry, instructing him to provide his troops with accoutrements which could not be procured in Italy, congratulating him on the discipline which he was reported to have established among his troops, and expressing a desire to deserve his friendship.[b] On 17th February he wrote again from Tolentino assuring Bernadotte of a welcome, and adding: "I greatly desire to make your acquaintance. I am three days from Rome; but we are coming to a treaty with the Pope."[b] On 19th February the Treaty of Tolentino was agreed to with the Pope; and Bonaparte was soon speeding to join his army, and to meet the reinforcements, which he had been awaiting with such feverish anxiety. In the first week in March, Bonaparte was on his way from Rome to Padua; and Bernadotte was on his way from Milan to the same rendezvous.

[a] *Bonaparte et son temps*, par Jung, iii. 157.
[b] *Corr. de N.* ii., Nos. 1469, 1503.

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE FIRST MEETING OF BONAPARTE AND BERNADOTTE — BERNADOTTE'S QUARREL WITH BERTHIER

MARCH 1797

"I saw in him a young man of twenty-five or twenty-six years of age, who assumes the airs of a man of fifty, and in my opinion that does not bode well for the Republic."—*Bernadotte speaking of his first meeting with Bonaparte.*

"He possesses a French head and a Roman heart."—*Bonaparte speaking of his first meeting with Bernadotte.*

"A Republican grafted upon a French cavalier."—*Ib.*

THE result of the first meeting of Bonaparte and Bernadotte, in March 1797, has been told by several writers in substantially the same terms. Bernadotte either said or wrote of the interview: "He received me very well, but I saw in him a young man of twenty-five or twenty-six years of age, who assumes the airs of a man of fifty, and in my opinion that does not bode well for the Republic."[a] Bonaparte, on the other hand, is said to have criticised Bernadotte's extravagance of style—"sa jactance meridionale"; to have said of him that he possessed "a French head and a Roman heart"; and to have described him as "a Republican grafted upon a French cavalier."[b]

Bonaparte had the faculty of reading the minds and characters of men with an X-ray penetration. What did he mean by these mysterious phrases?

On the one hand there was Bernadotte's Southern loquacity, rising on occasions to eloquence, — a racial loquacity, the key to which is the Provençal

[a] Lafosse, 125. [b] Pingaud, 9.

phrase, "Quand je ne parle pas; je ne pense pas"; his love of praise and glory for their own sakes; the timidity and irresolution, which we shall often find him displaying in political crises, affairs, and enterprises; his exaggeration of thought and speech; his Gascon bluff, tempered by Béarnais caution; his emotional excitability, finding expression in tears of joy or of chagrin; and the tendency to a jealous self-regard which accompanied his Southern temperament. On the other hand there was his singular sang-froid and presence of mind in moments of danger or emergency; his indomitable energy and strength, when the responsibility for action fell upon himself alone; the indefinite but lofty sentiments of honour and of conscience, which he always claimed and believed to be his guiding stars; a chivalry springing from within and giving dignity and grace to his conduct and to his bearing; his extraordinary power of magnetising the wild soldiers of the Revolution, and his still more extraordinary power of checking and holding back his own impetuous personality. How could so strange a medley of conflicting qualities be better epitomised than in Bonaparte's compendious judgment?

De Quincey, in the fourth of his "Letters to a Young Man," discusses the true Roman mind and character, and exemplifies them by the story of Marius in chains driving from his presence, by the magical effect of his voice and eye, the slave, who was sent to put him to death. Just such a strain of Roman strength was mated with the racial foibles of this Gascon from Béarn. Napoleon's expressive phrases sum up the blend of weakness and of force, which gave to Bernadotte his peculiar power of both attracting and dominating his subordinates.

Some writers have drawn a hasty inference that an

BONAPARTE AND BERNADOTTE.
Who met for the first time in March 1797.

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immediate antipathy or dissension sprang from the first meeting of these two remarkable men.[a] There was no open breach until the following October, and no definite quarrel until the Revolution of Brumaire. In the meantime, Bonaparte showed Bernadotte many marks of favour and confidence; and Bernadotte's attitude towards Bonaparte was, on the whole, one of respect and of loyalty.

But the germs of jealousy and suspicion had already found a place in Bernadotte's mind—jealousy of this astonishing young man more than six years younger than himself, yet his superior in education, in knowledge of the world, in military attainments, and in military fame; and suspicion of this young man's ambition, so different from the genuine Republicanism of his late chiefs, Jourdan and Kléber. On the other hand, Bonaparte saw, in this strange, eloquent, impetuous Gascon, a stronger personality than that of any of his other comrades in arms. Such a man was not to be led, driven, or managed like Masséna, Murat, or Augereau, and might turn out to be an obstacle, rather than an aid, to Bonaparte's already fixed resolve to pluck the fruit of absolute power, as soon as it was ripe.

Next to Bonaparte, the most important man in the army, and the only one who enjoyed his absolute confidence, was his principal staff officer, General Berthier, whose attitude towards his chief was the reverse of Bernadotte's. He was an older man than either of them—sixteen years older than Bonaparte, ten years older than Bernadotte. Instead, however, of being jealous of the young Corsican, he at once perceived his genius, believed in his future, and attached himself to his fortunes. It was said in later years that he loved Napoleon as a nurse loves a child. He became

[a] *e.g.* Guillon, 11.

the Emperor's staff officer and right hand in nearly all his great campaigns, and, as a reward, was included for eight years, as Sovereign Prince of Neuchâtel, among the crowned heads of Europe.

Colonel Dupuy had informed both Bonaparte and Berthier of his quarrel with Bernadotte over the billeting arrangements at Milan.[a] Between Bonaparte and Bernadotte the incident became the subject of a reproof and an explanation. Between Berthier and Bernadotte it nearly led to a duel. Berthier, in speaking about it, assumed an ironical tone, and implied that Bernadotte had treated with indignity a good officer of the army; but he quickly found that this Gascon newcomer was not to be trifled with. "I have punished," said Bernadotte, "one who was insubordinate. If you are minded to take his part, I am your man. You are, like me, a general of division. I am far from being inclined to quarrel, but I have a hearty wish to call those of my equals to account who, like you, think fit to assume a dictatorial air." Berthier thereupon apologised, said he had only mentioned Dupuy's complaint, in order to be better informed of his fault, and assured Bernadotte that he would be delighted to cultivate his friendship.[b]

One more passage of arms occurred between these two men, before the campaign began. After Bonaparte's first review of Bernadotte's troops, everyone, including the general-in-chief, noticed and praised the precision of their movements and the smartness of their appearance. Bonaparte never forgot it. Montholon records that at St. Helena he said of Bernadotte's troops: "Elles étaient belles, en bon état, et bien disciplinées." Berthier, on the occasion of the review at Padua, said in Berna-

[a] pp. 188, 189. [b] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 99, 100.

dotte's hearing,[a] "I am anxious to see whether these fine gentlemen are not fearful of the cannons deranging their elegant dress." Bernadotte turned to him, and with a fierce look exclaimed, "Rest assured that there is not an individual in my division, who is not ready to prove to you that he is as brave as yourself." He never afterwards made friends with Berthier; and, in later years, the absence of cordiality between them was not calculated to smooth matters between Bernadotte and Napoleon.

These incidents at Milan and at Padua show what an impetuous, unsophisticated Gascon Bernadotte was at this time. Before he had passed a month in the army of Italy, he had been on the brink of fighting two duels, and had succeeded in exciting enmity in powerful quarters.

The hostility which Bernadotte could arouse is reflected in the judgment passed on him by General Caffarelli, who described him as "very ardent, noted for his courage, possessing the powers of electrising his officers and men; but a despot in his division, believed to be a flatterer of those of whom he had need, a treacherous and dangerous enemy; a looter like the rest."[b] Let us compare this picture with the opinion which General Desaix, who earned the title of "le Bayard de notre armée,"[c] recorded in his journal: "Bernadotte—young, full of fire, of vigour, of fine enthusiasms, above all of character; very estimable. He is not popular, because he is supposed to be mad (*passe pour enragé*). His troops are the best in the whole army in bearing and appearance."[d]

These judgments of Caffarelli and Desaix—both brave and gallant officers—prove that, if Bernadotte

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 99, 100.
[b] Pingaud, 8.
[c] Ségur ii. 59.
[d] Desaix, *Journal de Voyage*, 70.

was, on the one hand, the object of jealousy and hostility, he also won his share of admiration and esteem. But the friendships and enmities of his equals were of small importance, when compared with his relations with his new commander-in-chief, whose personality was to colour the rest of his life, and was to cast upon his path both lustre and shadow. Their direct relations covered thirteen years, from their first meeting in March 1797, down to their last meeting in the summer of 1810, when Napoleon, Emperor of the French, allowed Bernadotte, Marshal and Prince of the Empire, to accept election as Crown Prince of Sweden. From the hour when the two men first met and looked each other in the face, their careers continued to be strangely related, until a day came, when Bernadotte, in his palace at Stockholm, was told of the death, on the rock of St. Helena, of his old commander and rival.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE CROSSING OF THE TAGLIAMENTO

MARCH 10–18, 1797

"Soldiers, do not forget that you come from the army of Sambre and Meuse, and that the eyes of the army of Italy are fixed on you."—*General Bernadotte's address to his troops on the banks of the Tagliamento, 16th March 1797.*

BERNADOTTE and his troops had only been in Italy for a few weeks, and had already provoked jealousy and ill-will among their new comrades—the officers and men of the army of Italy. But these rivalries were now to be laid aside, or to be turned to a useful purpose in face of the enemy; for the invasion of Austria was about to begin.

The French army of invasion was more than 60,000 strong, and its line extended from the Tyrolean Alps almost to the shores of the Gulf of Venice. The left wing was far away to the north in Tyrol, under the command of General Joubert, one of the few generals in whose ability to command an independent corps Napoleon frequently expressed his confidence. The centre was near the confines of Tyrol and the Venetian states, under General Masséna, who had already won the popular title of "the spoiled child of victory." The right wing, which extended almost to the shores of the Gulf of Venice, was under the personal command of General Bonaparte himself.[a]

It may be safely inferred that no unimportant share of the burden of the campaign was expected to fall upon the right wing, otherwise General Bonaparte would not have personally taken command of

[a] Jomini, x. 23; *Victoires, Conquêtes*, viii. 81, 82.

it. It consisted of the divisions of General Serrurier and General Bernadotte; and General Bernadotte's division, which was about 9900 strong, was made the vanguard of the army. Bonaparte could not have paid Bernadotte a higher compliment, or have conferred upon him a greater favour, than by giving him the post of honour—the command of the vanguard of that wing of the army, upon which the main burden of the campaign was expected to fall. Masséna and Joubert creditably discharged their duty on the left and in the centre, but no general won more renown in this short campaign than Bernadotte. He owed this opportunity to Bonaparte's selection of him to command the vanguard of the right wing.

Bonaparte placed under Bernadotte a young general, who was destined to win a greater military reputation than his commander, and, like him, to wear a crown—General Joachim Murat. A writer has suggested that Murat was placed as a spy on Bernadotte,[a] but there is no necessity for any such explanation. Murat was given the command of the advance guard of Bernadotte's division, and who could have been more worthily or wisely chosen to lead the vanguard of a vanguard than that Murat "of the snow-white plume," the subject of Byron's fine lines written after his pathetic end?—

> "There where death's brief pang was quickest,
> And the battle's wreck lay thickest,
> . . . . . .
> While the broken line enlarging
> Fell or fled along the plain,
> There be sure was Murat charging!
> There he ne'er shall charge again."

This was the first meeting of Bernadotte and Murat, who, in later years, became friends, rivals, and

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 103.

kings. Colonel Lahure, whose regiment was in Murat's vanguard, does justice to both of them. He frequently commends Bernadotte for his strong qualities as a commander; and he also speaks, in his memoirs, in high praise of Murat's frankness and valour. "How many evenings," he writes, "we spent in the same tent, smoking the same pipe (*fumant dans la même pipe*), never dreaming of the high destiny which awaited him, or of its tragic termination."[a] Among the other generals with Bernadotte were General Friant, a gallant officer, who afterwards gained distinction; General Fiorella, a cousin and protégé of Bonaparte's; and General Sarrazin, the chief of the staff.

The campaign opened on 10th March, and it was practically finished in a month. Although it turned out a triumphant success, and involved comparatively little fighting, it was a daring enterprise accompanied by considerable risk. In the path of the French army lay a succession of rivers, of which the principal were the Piave, the Tagliamento, and the Isonzo. The line of march may be compared, not inaptly, to "an obstacle race." Beyond these rivers lay a mountainous country, into which Bonaparte was about to penetrate with a force altogether insufficient to keep up a line of communications or to sustain a prolonged struggle. Everything depended on the rapidity and dash of the movement. Austrian reinforcements were expected from the Rhine. Bonaparte was resolved to finish the campaign, and did finish it, before the reinforcements arrived.

The first river to be crossed was the Piave, but no attempt was made to oppose its passage; and the first stage of the campaign, from 11th March to 16th

[a] Lahure, 118.

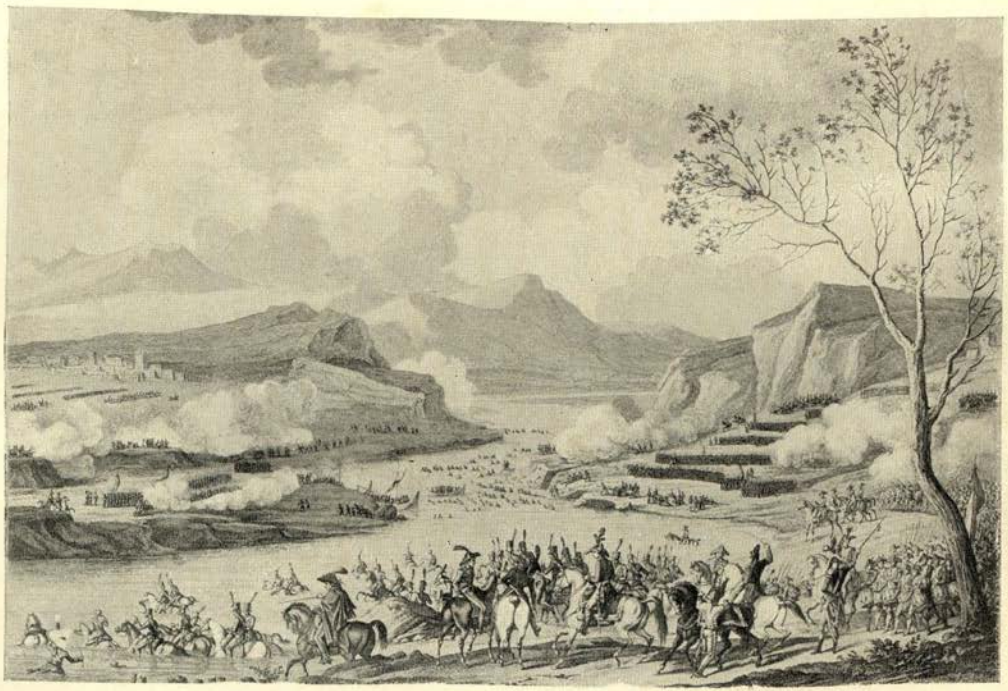
March, consisted of a rapid and practically unopposed advance by way of Castel Franco, Treviso, and Sacile. On the morning of the 16th, Bernadotte, with the vanguard, left Sacile, and at midday reached Valvasone, on the banks of the Tagliamento, with the enemy in full view on the other side.

The Austrians were in a strong position; and, in order to attack them, the French had to cross a bridgeless but fordable river. Bonaparte had recourse to a simple but successful stratagem. He ordered his troops to retire beyond the reach of the enemy's fire, to establish a bivouac, and to begin to cook their midday meal. The Archduke fell into the trap; and, coming to the conclusion that the French were not going to attack on that day, withdrew his forces to the camp, which was at some distance away. Hardly had they retired, when Bonaparte gave the signal. The soldiers dropped their pots and pans, and ran to arms. Forming rapidly, they advanced in columns by echelons, and were soon drawn up on the water's edge.[a]

The two divisions of the army were ordered to cross with Bernadotte's corps on the right. The cavalry leaders, Duphot and Murat, led the van; and the army crossed in the face of a heavy fire and of some vigorous but ineffectual charges by the Austrian cavalry. Two incidents, in which Bernadotte figured, are associated with the passage of the Tagliamento.

When the moment came for fording the river in face of the enemy, Bernadotte addressed a few stirring words to his division. "Soldiers," he exclaimed, "do not forget that you come from the army of Sambre and Meuse, and that the eyes of the army of Italy are fixed on you." He thus seized upon the

[a] Alison, vi. 8; Lahure, 119; Sarrans, 17.



THE CROSSING OF THE TAGLIAMENTO, MARCH 16, 1797.

After the picture by Duplessis-Bertaux.

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jealousies and rivalries of the moment, and used them for the purpose of stimulating the energies of his troops. Several eye-witnesses have testified to the electrical effect which they produced on his hearers.[a] They were frequently quoted at the time, and passed into common currency as a stock phrase. Barras in his memoirs records an occasion, when they were utilised in a parliamentary debate. In the Council of 500, a scene of confusion, when threats were bandied about and blows were imminent, was quieted in an instant by an exclamation from a deputy: "Remember that the Royalists have their eyes on you, and that they will take advantage of our divisions;" and he adds that this was a paraphrase of Bernadotte's famous address to his troops on the banks of the Tagliamento.[b]

A reasoned comparison of the military speeches, which were delivered from time to time by Bonaparte and by Bernadotte respectively, would not be the least interesting of the contrasts which their personalities suggest. Perhaps the difference between these two military orators may be explained in this way—that Bonaparte usually addressed himself less to his immediate audience, than to a wider public and to posterity, while Bernadotte always spoke for the purpose of electrising his listeners in an emergency. The address to the troops, before crossing the Tagliamento, was conceived in that spirit, and was a perfect example of the kind. Let us compare it with Bonaparte's equally simple, but far grander, exclamation to his troops before the battle of the Pyramids: "Remember that forty centuries are looking down upon you." It is almost

[a] Lahure, 119; Capitaine Français, 153, 154.

[b] Barras, iii. 322; (E.) iii. 282.

impossible to suppose that the rank and file of the army of Egypt could have been deeply touched by such an appeal; but it was certain, when bruited abroad, to strike the imagination of France, and, when recorded, to become historical. It was in the same spirit that Bonaparte, on leaving Egypt, wrote to Kléber that he "was accustomed to look for a recompense for the toil and privation of life in the opinion of posterity."[a] But Bernadotte, on the banks of the Tagliamento, had no thought of posterity. His object was to get his troops to the other side of a wide channel, under the eyes of a critical commander and of carping colleagues.

Something more than a speech was necessary, in order to carry out the rapid passage of the bridgeless river. The first regiment hesitated to enter the water. Bernadotte shouted to them that the stream was not higher than their waists. A voice from the ranks replied, "We are not on horseback." The Gascon, without hesitation, leaped from his horse, though in the middle of the torrent, and cried, "Advance forward!"[b] The troops followed on with loud cries of "Long live our general!" Generals Duphot and Andréossy also plunged into the current at other points. It was a bitter March day, the air was piercing, and the water was cold; but who could complain when the generals set the example? Lavalette describes Bernadotte as "crossing the numerous branches of the river under the most murderous fire."[c] Before the enemy could collect themselves for an effective defence, the French were drawn up on the left bank. After a vigorous fusilade, the Austrians retired leaving

[a] *Corr. de N.* v., 4374.

[b] Sarrazin, *Mémoires*, 64; ib. *Phil.* ii. 100, 101.

[c] Lavalette, ii., 224.

500 prisoners and some cannon in the hands of their pursuers.

The passage of the Tagliamento was a turning-point in the campaign, and might have been a very sanguinary conflict, if the French had been forced to attack the enemy strongly posted on the other side of the river. Thanks to Bonaparte's successful stratagem, and not a little to Bernadotte's inspiring leadership of the vanguard, the river was crossed with comparatively little loss, and in excellent order. Captain Français tells us that Bonaparte "congratulated us and the Gascon general of our division on our valour."[a]

[a] Capitaine Français, 152.

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE STORMING OF GRADISCA

MARCH 19, 1797

"There is the enemy you are to attack; you must either take or blockade Gradisca, and join me again before night on yonder hills."—*Napoleon's order to Bernadotte, 19th March 1797.*

AFTER a day's rest on the banks of the Tagliamento, and two days' march by way of Palma Nova, Bernadotte reached the next obstacle in the path of the invading army. This was the river Isonzo, which was sentinelled by the fortress of Gradisca, with a garrison of 3000 picked Austrian troops. On the morning of 19th March he occupied the hills which overlooked the river and the fortress, and halted, so as to await the main body of the army.

Towards 10 a.m. General Bonaparte arrived with his staff, about forty officers of rank and an escort of light dragoons. He rode up the line at full gallop, halted at the left, examined the country, and said to Bernadotte, pointing to the plain below: "There is the enemy you are to attack; you must either take or blockade Gradisca and join me again before night on yonder hills, whither I am going with General Serrurier." He had no sooner uttered these words than he spurred his horse and set off at full speed.[a]

Bernadotte was unaccustomed to receiving such a laconic and ambiguous order. For a similar occasion, his late commander-in-chief, General Jourdan, would have given him precise written instructions, providing for every contingency. Bonaparte, by ordering him to take or blockade Gradisca, had thrown upon him the

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 101; ib. *Bonaparte's Confession*, App. 245, 247.

responsibility of deciding which he was to do. He felt that, if he were to blockade Gradisca, he would be blamed for not having stormed it; and that, if he proceeded to storm it, he would be told that he ought to have blockaded it. "I see it all," he said, with tears in his eyes, to the chief of the staff (who himself describes the scene): "he is jealous of me, and wants to disgrace me. I have no resource left but to blow my brains out. I have no written orders to protect me in the discharge of my duty." The chief of the staff replied that this was doubtless Bonaparte's usual way of giving orders, and that at the end of the day it would be time enough to think of accounting to him for their action.

There was only one course for Bernadotte to adopt under these circumstances. With the taunts of General Berthier still ringing in his ears, and with the knowledge of the sentiments of rivalry and jealousy which existed in the army of Italy towards himself and his division, he could not afford to hesitate. He quickly resolved to carry the place by a *coup de main*, if it did not capitulate at once. Accordingly, his first step was to send Colonel Lahure to summon the garrison to surrender, instructing him at the same time to keep his eyes open, and to report on his return the exact condition of the fortifications. The colonel faithfully discharged his duty. He brought back the reply of the commandant of Gradisca that "he would not surrender, but would so comport himself as to win the respect of the French," and he reported that the outworks of the fortress were in bad condition and the ditches dry, and that the walls could be easily scaled with the help of ladders.[a] This was poor comfort to Berna-

[a] Lahure, 121, 122.

dotte, as he had with him either no ladders or no adequate and available supply of that necessary commodity. But this did not alter his resolution. He proceeded to storm the town, and in Lahure's memoirs we read an account of this hardy enterprise.

In the absence of scaling-ladders, recourse was had to the primitive methods of forcing the gates by cannonading, burning, and striking them with hatchets. His troops displayed reckless bravery, and 500 French soldiers lost their lives in the course of the day's fighting. The general did not spare himself. Colonel Lahure describes how Bernadotte remained for three hours exposed to a murderous fire encouraging his troops: "Pendant trois heures il resta là, exposé à une fusillade meurtrière et animant les travailleurs par son exemple."[a]

The following was the text of Bernadotte's ultimatum to the Austrian commander:—

"You have defended yourself, sir, like a brave man, and have thereby won the esteem of soldiers; but any further resistance on your part would be a crime which I should visit principally upon yourself. In order to justify myself to posterity, I must summon you to surrender yourself within ten minutes; otherwise, I shall put your troops to the sword. Prevent the bloodshed that you would thus cause. The philanthropic principles, which must actuate a commander, impose this duty upon you. The scaling-ladders are ready; the grenadiers and light infantry are eagerly awaiting the signal for the assault."[b]

There is a touch of Gascony about Bernadotte's threat to put the garrison to the sword, as well as about his allusion to the scaling-ladders being ready. "C'était une bravade," writes Lahure, "car nous ne possédions pas une seule échelle."[a] Yet, scaling-ladders

[a] Lahure, 122, 123. [b] *Moniteur*, 31st March 1797.

THE STORMING OF GRADISCA BY BERNADOTTE, MARCH 19, 1797.

After the picture by Duplessis-Bertaux.

Painted afterwards in 1802, when Bernadotte was Councillor of State and Commander of the Army of the West.

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are given a place in this ultimatum, and figure in the pictures of the storming of Gradisca, which were published in later years. But, if all is fair in war, a similar latitude may perhaps be extended to the art of military painting.

Bernadotte's ultimatum was aided by circumstances. The ammunition of the garrison began to fail, and General Serrurier's division was seen lining the hills. The governor's proposal to surrender commenced as follows: "The garrison will pass out *to-morrow morning at five a.m.*," to which Bernadotte replied: "The garrison will pass out *in a quarter of an hour.*"[a]

Leaving his officers to carry out the details of the capitulation, Bernadotte galloped off to the heights where Bonaparte and his staff were to be found, and reported the taking of Gradisca with the loss of 500 men. Bonaparte received him coldly. While the Gascon general poured forth his graphic description of the day's proceedings, Bonaparte stood opposite him with arms crossed, with knitted brow, and with pressed lips. He replied that Bernadotte had acted most imprudently; that he ought not to have lost a single man; and that it would have been quite sufficient to blockade the place, until Serrurier's division had taken up their position upon the hills, when the Austrians must have soon surrendered from want of provisions.[b]

There was probably some truth in this criticism of Bonaparte's, but he had himself contributed to the result by giving ambiguous orders to a general, who was in a position which disabled him from

[a] Des-Jardins, v. 197.

[b] Sarrazin, *Mémoires*, 65; ib. *Confession of General Bonaparte*, 245–248.

taking any but the most courageous course. At St. Helena Napoleon more than once referred to the events of this day. In one place he showed a disposition to attribute the success of the day to Serrurier; and it has been suggested in some quarters that Bernadotte's precipitancy was due to a desire to forestall Serrurier.[a] But in a more candid moment Napoleon acknowledged to Montholon that Bernadotte's imprudence on this occasion was excusable. "Cet excès d'ardeur," he said, "était justifié par l'envie qu'avaient les troupes de Sambre et Meuse de se signaler, et par la noble émulation d'arriver à Gradisca avant les anciennes troupes d'Italie."[b]

Most of the historical accounts of the taking of Gradisca are founded upon Bonaparte's despatch to the Directory, in which he implies that the troops were carried away by their ardour, and that the general was forced to sustain them by cannonading the Palma Nova gate. In that despatch he adds: "General Bernadotte's division has conducted itself with a courage which is a guarantee of future successes. General Bernadotte, his aides-de-camp, and his generals braved every danger." He selected, among others, for honourable mention General Murat and Colonel Lahure.[c]

Whatever doubt there may have been in the minds of the commander-in-chief and of his staff as to the prudence of Bernadotte's action, there was no doubt in the minds of the public as to the merits of his performance. Masséna and Joubert, who commanded respectively the centre and left wing of the army of invasion, carried out their operations with distinction and success; but

[a] Pingaud, 10. [b] Montholon, iv. 82.

[c] *Corr. de N.* ii., No. 1600; *Moniteur*, 31st March 1797.

the crossing of the Tagliamento and the storming of Gradisca were the most notable, and the most noted, incidents of this short campaign, the honours of which—overshadowed, of course, by those which were due and were rendered to Bonaparte himself—rested with Bernadotte. The 16th and 19th of March added substantially to his reputation. He had already made his name on the banks of the Sambre, the Roer, the Rhine, and the Nahe, at Fleurus, Juliers, Maestricht, Neuwied, Creuznach, and Teining. He had now, in the passage of the Tagliamento and the storming of Gradisca, gained similar distinction in Italy. Public opinion is not disposed to look severely upon the imprudence of a successful operation, when accompanied by personal valour and daring.

Bernadotte's own account of the taking of Gradisca is contained in his written report to Bonaparte, dated 19th March, in which he describes his officers and men as advancing with an impetuous bravery, which seemed to be stimulated by the heavy fire from the ramparts. He selects for special praise Generals Murat, Mireur, and Friant.[a]

[a] *Corr. inéd. de N.* ii., 513, 516; *Bonaparte's Letters and Despatches*, i. 268–270.

CHAPTER XXXVII

The Invasion of Austria, and the Preliminaries of Peace at Leoben

March 20–April 26, 1797

"You in particular have proved, Citizen General, that you have made yourself familiar with this new theatre of war, and with the wise manœuvres which it demands. The Prince Charles must have recognised at Gradisca him, whose daring and skill he so often experienced in Germany."—*Extract from letter from the Directory to General Bernadotte, April* 1797.

After the surrender of Gradisca, the right wing of the French army marched northwards to Goritz, the capital of the Austrian province of that name. On the way from Gradisca to Goritz, Bernadotte's vanguard was in touch with the enemy's rear-guard, engaging them at Carinthia and taking a number of prisoners.[a] Goritz was entered on 21st March, and a vast amount of provisions and ammunition of war fell into the hands of the French. Here Bonaparte made a new departure. He separated the two divisions. He himself, with General Serrurier's division, marched northwards in order to effect a junction with the centre of the army which was invading the province of Carinthia under General Masséna. At the same time he detached Bernadotte with his division, and ordered him to pursue the column of the Prince of Reuss, which was retiring eastwards into the other great Austrian province of Carniola. Thus the French army was advancing on Vienna in three great bodies. General Joubert was marching far away in the north through Tyrol, Bonaparte and Masséna in the centre through Carinthia, and Bernadotte on the right through Carniola.

[a] *Moniteur*, 3rd April 1797.

Sarrazin tells us that Bonaparte, having learnt from Murat that Bernadotte had complained of receiving verbal and ambiguous orders, sent him a written order, which, according to his recollection, consisted of a single sentence: "The division Bernadotte is ordered immediately to depart for Klagenfurt, passing by Laybach."[a] Sarrazin's recollection is not far out; for the order appears in the correspondence of Napoleon as follows: "Klagenfurt, 10 Germinal, An. V. (30th March 1797). The enemy having evacuated Laybach, the commander-in-chief orders you to proceed thither with the whole of your division; you will there await further orders; you will take up your position there, and inform yourself upon all points."[b] Bernadotte could not complain that this order was verbal or that it was ambiguous; but its brevity astonished him, and he insisted upon regarding it as another attempt to place him in a false position. He also complained that this separation of his division from the rest of the army was a most risky proceeding, which might involve its annihilation. It appears, however, that the commander-in-chief was better informed; and the result justified the audacious conception of this plan of invasion.

However much Bernadotte might complain, criticise, or grumble, he did not fail to carry out the orders which he had received. On 20th March he advanced to Camagna, and drove the Austrian rear-guard out of that place. Proceeding by Wipbach, Prewald, and Adelsberg he entered Laybach, the capital of Carniola, about 1st April. During this ten days' march he penetrated the defiles of the Julian Alps, fought several skirmishes, and took some 1500 prisoners from the retiring Austrian rear-guard.

[a] Sarrazin, *Mémoires*, 66; ib. *Phil.* ii. 103. [b] *Corr. de N.*, 1661.

Two incidents occurred, during the march from Goritz to Laybach, which illustrate the ways of the army of Italy in dealing with conquered places, and also mark a fall from the high standard, that had hitherto marked Bernadotte's conduct in that respect. One of Bonaparte's methods of rewarding a general appears to have been to assign to him a town, and to allow him to enrich himself at the expense of the inhabitants. In this way he had assigned the seaport of Trieste to General Dugua, the commandant of the reserve of cavalry.[a] Trieste happened to be situate at no very great distance from Bernadotte's line of march, and General Murat, being aware of this circumstance, asked Bernadotte to allow him to push a reconnoitring party to that place. Bernadotte, who was ignorant of Bonaparte's arrangements and of Murat's motives, consented. Murat entered Trieste on 23rd March, driving out the Austrian hussars whom he found there, and proceeded to reconnoitre it in his own way for about three hours. He seized all the booty he could find, and retired at one gate, as General Dugua was entering it at the other. Dugua was indignant at the trick, and denounced Murat in unmeasured terms as a robber and a plunderer. He also blamed Bernadotte, who knew nothing of the transaction until it was all over. When it came to his ears, his first impulse was to do what he would have done in the army of Sambre and Meuse, namely, to censure both Dugua and Murat, and bring them to account; but he was told that this way of dealing with conquered cities was a recognised custom in the army of Italy, and that he, in his turn, would be entitled as a matter of course to his share of the spoils of war.[b]

[a] *Corr. de N.* ii., 1640, 1641.

[b] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 104, 105; ib. *Mémoires*, 66.

Bernadotte seems to have come to the conclusion that when in the army of Italy one must do as the army of Italy does; and his own turn soon came round. The quicksilver mines of Idria lay near his line of march, and, in pursuance of orders from Bonaparte he sent a detachment of troops to seize what was to be found there. They were just in time to annex an immense store of quicksilver, for the exportation of which four Spanish ships were lying in Trieste roads. Bonaparte had sent a commissary to superintend the carrying away of the treasure, with instructions that Bernadotte was to take what he wanted for himself and his staff. It is difficult to ascertain what exactly ensued. Bernadotte undoubtedly received part of this booty, and distributed shares to his staff, one of whom considered that his was proportionately inadequate. The amount has been variously stated. It appears, at all events, that Bernadotte, in complying with these orders and taking this first downward step, acted with a moderation which, in a subsequent conversation with the Director Barras, he spoke of rather regretfully,[a] while his staff also blamed him for being, or wishing to appear, moderate at their expense.[b]

It is not easy to ascertain what were the rules regulating "booty of war" in the army of Italy. There is, however, some reliable testimony from Austrian sources, which is to the effect that private property was not treated without respect by Bernadotte. We have a glimpse of the passing of Bernadotte's division through Carniola in an account given by the *curé* of Adelsberg (Joseph Weiniger). He describes the entry into that town, on 27th March, of the vanguard, with Murat at their head "riding majestically in front of his

[a] Barras, iii. 148; (E.) iii. 188.

[b] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 105, 106; ib. *Mémoires*, 66.

cavalry," and, on 2nd April, of the main body of the division "led by Bernadotte, with bands playing and banners flying." He records the surprise of the inhabitants, when they discovered that they had nothing to fear from the invading force, and his own surprise when informed that he was to continue his religious duties as if nothing had happened. "They exacted nothing," he says, "either in money or goods. The church was respected by them; and when, on Sundays, they were present at the service, their behaviour was Christian and becoming."[a] Bernadotte had, on 29th March, issued a proclamation promising the people of Carniola protection from any form of injury or insult; assuring them of respect for their property, person, life, and religion; and declaring that any violation of his proclamation by his soldiers would be punished by death. These promises appear to have been fulfilled. The quicksilver of Idria was the only source from which he benefited; and his action in appropriating a share of that booty was authorised by his commander-in-chief, and communicated to his Government.

While Bernadotte had penetrated with his division to Laybach, the capital of Carniola, Bonaparte and Masséna had reached Klagenfurt, the capital of Carinthia; and, before the end of March, the two provinces of Carniola and Carinthia were in the hands of the French. From Klagenfurt Bonaparte wrote to Bernadotte on 1st April :—

"You will find annexed, my dear General, an order for the organisation of the government of Carniola. You will choose the ten members of the Government. Instal them and make them take the oath of obedience to the French Republic. You will take great care that no contribution is levied in the country. You will take only necessary pro-

[a] Chélard, i. 13.

visions, and you will do all in your power to render the inhabitants of Carniola contented."[a]

He was not given much time to carry out these instructions, for, on 3rd April Bonaparte wrote from Freisach ordering him to leave Laybach on the following day for Klagenfurt, and then to follow the rest of the army on the road to Vienna.[a]

Bernadotte instantly obeyed this order, and was at Klagenfurt on 5th April. He then followed Bonaparte to Judenberg, in the province of Styria, whither, on 7th April, the Austrian plenipotentiaries came praying for peace.[a] An armistice was granted for a few days, and at the same time Bonaparte advanced his head-quarters to Leoben. This was the farthest point which was reached by the French army on the occasion of this invasion of Austria. On the map it appears to be about 70 or 80 miles from Vienna and not much less than 150 miles from the place where the French army had crossed the frontiers of Austria. It had been a successful campaign, and the result had justified Bonaparte's daring plan and its brilliant execution.

While Bonaparte remained at Leoben, Bernadotte established his camp beside the neighbouring village of St. Michael, and the rest of the French army was concentrated at various posts within easy distance of the head-quarters. The negotiations for peace proceeded between the Austrian plenipotentiaries and General Bonaparte, who took nobody into his confidence except his chief of the staff, Berthier, and Generals Masséna and Bernadotte. He kept them fully informed of the principal terms of the negotiations, which included the transfer to Austria of the Venetian States in return for the relinquishment of Belgium to France. After the commander-in-chief,

[a] *Corr. de N.* ii., 1673, 1677, 1704.

the honours of the campaign rested with Bernadotte, and after Bernadotte with Masséna, who had done extremely well at the combat of Tarvis, and at other stages of his march.

The Austrian plenipotentiaries showed a marked preference for Bernadotte's troops. Their dress and manners contrasted favourably with the slovenliness and ribaldry of the soldiers of Masséna and of the other generals. The plenipotentiaries used to ask to be allowed to follow Bernadotte's division on public occasions. It can be readily understood that these compliments and preferences did not serve to stem the rising feud between the soldiers from the Rhine and the rest of the army of Italy.[a]

The articles of peace, which are known in history as the preliminaries of Leoben, having been signed at that place on 18th April, and having been ratified at Vienna on 26th April, the Government sent letters to the leading generals, thanking them for their services and distributing to each appropriate praise. We may close this chapter with a quotation from the letter which they sent to Bernadotte. Its language sufficiently indicates the way in which public opinion in Paris regarded his military position at this time :—

"The brave divisions, which you have led from the river Main, have signalised their junction with the army of Italy, Citizen General, by their successes; and their commanders have shown themselves worthy to associate the laurels which they won on that river with those which their brothers in arms have reaped on the banks of the Adige. You in particular have proved, Citizen General, that you have made yourself familiar with this new theatre of war, and with the wise manœuvres which it demands. The Prince Charles must have recognised at Gradisca him, whose daring and skill he so often experienced in Germany."[b]

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 108. [b] Lafosse, 132; Sarrans, 18.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

JEALOUSY AND QUARRELS BETWEEN BERNADOTTE'S TROOPS AND THOSE OF MASSÉNA AND AUGEREAU

APRIL–MAY 1797

"One division brought by Bernadotte from Germany to Italy, and distinguished by its polished manners and by the denomination of 'gentlemen,' became a subject of sharp jesting, often degenerating into serious quarrels."—*Mémoire du Count Miot de Melito.*

"The army of Italy prided itself upon being a Revolutionary army composed only of 'citizens' and not of 'gentlemen.' A division which Bernadotte brought from Germany to Italy especially singled itself out by its more polished manners, and the two armies presented a striking contrast."—*Souvenirs de Vicomte de Reiset.*

WHEN the preliminaries of peace had been ratified, the French army proceeded, before the end of April, to evacuate Austria and to return to Italy. General Bonaparte's orders, directing the details of the evacuation, were issued on 24th April. By these orders it was contemplated that Masséna's division was to follow Bernadotte's from town to town. Meanwhile, the feud between the old corps of the army of Italy and the newcomers from the armies of the Rhine, and especially between the divisions of Generals Masséna and Bernadotte, had become more serious and acute. During the rapid invasion of Austria, these two divisions had been fully occupied, and had been separated from each other; but one of the effects of the peace of Leoben was to bring about an enforced leisure and juxtaposition, which facilitated the development of their mutual hostility. When they started on their march to Italy, the smouldering fires of jealousy were upon the point of bursting into flames.

The flames made their appearance at Laybach, the

first important halting-place, where a considerable number of both divisions found themselves, without their generals. Masséna was on his way to Paris carrying the preliminary articles of peace to the Government, and had left General Brune in command of his division. Bernadotte had gone forward to Trieste, leaving General Sarrazin in charge of his troops. These substitutes were quite unequal to the task of controlling the angry passions of the soldiers, which could only be held in check by the personal popularity which Bernadotte enjoyed among all ranks, and by the respect and awe with which Masséna's division regarded their "spoiled child of victory."

Shortly after the arrival of the troops in Laybach, General Duphot, one of Masséna's brigadiers, during a game of billiards, addressed a subaltern of Bernadotte's division as "Citoyen," while the latter, in speaking to the general, used the word "Monsieur." Duphot said that he wished to be addressed as "Citoyen," and the other refused to do so, saying that he knew of no "Citoyen" except before the civil tribunals, and that "Monsieur" seemed to him the proper way for one officer to address the other in society. Duphot instantly challenged him, and the challenge was accepted. There was nothing in their uniforms to mark their respective ranks, but when it was disclosed that one was a general and the other a subaltern, a duel between them became impossible. The young officer, however, declared that he was ready to fight anyone of his own rank who objected to be called "Monsieur." He was quickly taken at his word, and in the duel which ensued he killed a young officer of Masséna's with a sword-thrust in his lungs, in the presence of a number of the officers and men of both divisions.[a]

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 108–111.

The news of the duel and of its fatal termination quickly spread, and led to other encounters between officers, as well as to affrays between soldiers. General Brune called on General Sarrazin to issue an order forbidding the use of the word "Monsieur" as a form of salutation, and requiring instead the use of the term "Citoyen." Sarrazin replied that he could not issue such an order, as Bernadotte would disapprove of it, and the troops would disobey it; but he offered to fight Brune. In fact, the commanders and officers, instead of separating the combatants, took sides with them. Between duels and affrays, more than fifty were killed, and about three hundred wounded. In order to avert a pitched battle, the drums were beaten, all troops were confined to barracks, and Masséna's division was got out of the town before daybreak next morning. General Brune sent Thiébault post-haste to Bonaparte with a despatch giving his version of the incident, so as to prevent its being turned to his disadvantage. General Sarrazin, on his arrival at Trieste, reported the occurrence to Bernadotte, who approved of what he had done, and said that he would not have retained him in his division, if he had issued the order which Brune had required.[a]

Thiébault, who was one of Masséna's officers, was of opinion that Masséna's division was entirely in the wrong.[b] But, whatever may have been the merits of these "*rixes*," as they were called, there can be no question that they were serious and notorious. Frequent references to them are to be found in the memoirs of that day. It will suffice to cite the evidence of two witnesses, Count Miot de Melito and Vicomte de Reiset. The point is worth

[a] Sarrazin, *Mémoires*, 68, 69; *L'Art de la guerre*, 253.

[b] Thiébault (tr.), i. 321, 322.

dwelling upon. These quarrels led to a permanent estrangement between Masséna and Bernadotte;[a] and, occurring at an impressionable stage of his life, they tended to foment the jealous side of Bernadotte's temperament.

Count Miot de Melito, who was at Milan twice in the course of the summer of 1797, thus describes the impression which he formed upon this subject: "Bonaparte encouraged the angry rivalry between the army of the Rhine and the army of Italy, which arose out of the outward forms and ceremonies adopted in each. The army of Italy gloried in being a Revolutionary and citizen body, while that of the Rhine passed for an army of 'Messieurs,' as it was called at Milan. . . . One division brought by Bernadotte from Germany to Italy, and distinguished by its polished manners and by the denomination of 'Messieurs,' at that time considered to be an aristocratic form, became a subject of sharp jesting, often degenerating into serious quarrels between the officers and men of the two armies."[b]

The Vicomte de Reiset places it on record that he had frequent opportunities of observing the difference between the exterior forms adopted by the armies of the Rhine and of Italy respectively. "The army of Italy," he says, "prided itself upon being a Revolutionary army composed only of citizens and not of gentlemen, as they contemptuously designated us. A division which Bernadotte brought from Germany to Italy especially singled itself out by its more polished manners, and the two armies presented a striking contrast."[c]

These rivalries were widely noticed and discussed in the Press of the day. For example, the following

[a] *Masséna*, par Dabbadie, 45. [b] Miot de Melito, i. 210.
[c] De Reiset, 62.

passage occurs in a philosophic journal belonging to the moderate party—*L'Historien ou l'Historique* of a later date: "It is sad to see the conquerors, who we hope soon will earn the title of pacificators, shedding in useless quarrels the blood which ought to be shed only for their country. The divisions of Bernadotte and Augereau have fought with loss of life, say the Italian newspapers, over the title of Monsieur and Citoyen, the former being used by Bernadotte's division, and the latter by Augereau's. Thanks are due to General Bonaparte for having annulled an order of Augereau's that anyone using the term Monsieur is incapable of serving in the army, and thus forbidding penalties not recognised by the penal code." It would appear from this passage that Bernadotte's division was reported to be in hot water with the troops of Augereau, as well as with those of Masséna.[a]

A modern writer of distinction, M. A. Dry, exculpates Bernadotte from blame in the following passage: "Bernadotte was not responsible for this state of feeling. In the army of Italy, as in that of the Rhine and of the Sambre and Meuse, he did his duty very brilliantly, and in the short campaigns of Austria, at the Tagliamento, at Gradisca, at Trieste, and Laybach, his division distinguished itself by its discipline and by its courageous attitude."[b]

The cause of quarrel, in any view, was not one which casts much discredit upon Bernadotte or upon his division. The head and front of their offending, in the eyes of the army of Italy, appears to have been that they strove to reconcile the formalities of old politeness with the manners of a Republican camp.

The firmness with which Bernadotte conducted this curious campaign on behalf of the courtesies of

[a] *L'Historien*, etc., 20th July 1797. [b] Dry, ii. 340, 341.

camp life reminds us of Bonaparte's description of him as "a Republican grafted on a French cavalier," and prepares us for one of the puzzles which his later career presented. How did it come about that this ex-ranker from Gascony, this child of the Revolution, bred, as he had been, in barracks and battlefields, succeeded, during more than thirty years, in charming the aristocratic court of Sweden by the grace and dignity of his bearing as their Crown Prince and King? His enemies would explain it all away, by reference to the dramatic adaptability of his race. But, when a man is found acting the same part, without effort or affectation, under various conditions and circumstances, during a long and strenuous life, his friends may be excused for asking us to believe that his natural refinement and charm of manner were the outward signs of those chivalrous qualities, which were exemplified in the solicitude which he always displayed for the welfare and comfort of subordinates, prisoners, and conquered countries.

PART VI

BERNADOTTE, GOVERNOR OF FRIULI—HIS INTRODUCTION TO POLITICS—THE *COUP D'ÉTAT* OF THE 18TH FRUCTIDOR, BEFORE AND AFTER—THE RIFT WITH BONAPARTE—HOW BERNADOTTE BECAME AN AMBASSADOR

MAY 1797–JANUARY 1798

"Bernadotte était-ce instinct de roi latent? se montra seul modéré."—ALBERT SOREL.

"Un des officiers les plus essentials à la gloire de l'armée d'Italie, un des amis les plus solides de la République, incapable par principes comme par caractère de capituler avec les ennemis de la liberté pas plus qu' avec l'honneur."—*Bonaparte's description of Bernadotte, 9th August 1797.*

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MAY 1797–JANUARY 1798

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CHAPTER XXXIX

BERNADOTTE, GOVERNOR OF FRIULI—THE ARREST OF COUNT D'ANTRAIGUES

MAY 21, 1797

"But, sir, the law of nations has no application to the Count d'Antraigues, who is said to be the agent of Louis XVIII., our enemy, and in consequence I declare him under arrest. If he had been the stronger, he would have had us all shot; now that we are the stronger here, we exercise the right of the stronger." —*Bernadotte's gasconade on the occasion of the arrest of Count d'Antraigues, 21st May 1797.*

THE peace of Leoben was agreed to in April; but was, in itself, little more than a truce or armistice. It served as a provisional basis for *pourparlers*, which dragged along for six months. Pending these conferences, the Venetian States were occupied by French troops and governed by French generals, who were instructed to be ready to renew hostilities at any moment, in the event of any diplomatic hitch or of any breakdown in the negotiations.[a]

During this interval of suspended activity, Bernadotte held the positions of Governor of Friuli, the frontier province of the Venetian States, and of commander of three divisions of French troops with head-quarters at Udine, the provincial capital. Friuli was a post of special importance. Bonaparte, in a letter of 21st May ordering Bernadotte to leave Trieste and move to Udine, wrote: "The gorges of Carinthia will form part of your command, and you will be the rear-guard of the army."[a]

Before he left Trieste for Udine, Bernadotte became involved in an incident which entailed serious

[a] *Corr. de N.* iii., 1781, 1818.

political consequences, and exposed him to a great deal of criticism.

The dominant party, in the Venetian States, had taken advantage of the absence of the main body of the French army, during the invasion of Austria, to massacre isolated French garrisons, as well as wounded and sick, who had been left behind in the hospitals. Bonaparte had warned them that, if they did anything of the kind, it would go hard with "le Lion valétudinaire de Saint Marc"; and, after the peace of Leoben, he sent them the following message: "I will be to Venice a second Attila. I will have no more Inquisitions, no more Livre d'Or. These are barbarous institutions. Your Government is too old. It must fall to pieces." He kept his word by handing Venice over to the tender mercies of the local democrats, with the immediate result that the aristocratic oligarchy was compelled to abdicate, and even to invite French troops to come and temper the terrors of a local revolution.

One of the consequences of this revolution was the departure, on the eve of the entry of the French troops, of the Russian Minister, Mordninov, to whose legation belonged a certain Count d'Antraigues, who was not a young Russian attaché, but an elderly French aristocrat.[a]

D'Antraigues had been one of the nobles, who, in 1789, associated themselves enthusiastically with the first stages of the French Revolution. He wrote a memoir upon "The States-General," which had a vogue only second to that of Sieyès' celebrated brochure. He was a personal friend of Rousseau, and he cherished the vain dream of reconciling the new ideas with the maintenance of a monarchical constitution. Having quickly been disillusioned, he

[a] *Le Comte d'Antraigues*, par Pingaud.

devoted himself to the service of the Royal Family as a sort of wandering diplomat *in partibus*. It appears from his own statements that he had been officially appointed attaché to the Russian Legation at Venice on 15th December 1795, and that he had resided with the Minister, and had been recognised, in his diplomatic capacity, by the Senate of the Venetian Republic. But there seems no reason to doubt that his diplomatic character was a mere cloak to cover his true position as an active agent of the "King," or, as Bernadotte was bound to regard him, the Pretender. His services were not monopolised by Russia. He was, or became, also an agent of the Austrian Foreign Office; and was, in fact, a sort of pan-European spy, with agents and correspondents in many quarters.

Mordninov applied to the French Legation for passports, which were granted with the proviso, that they would not be available for "a certain d'Antraigues, agent of a French *émigré*, who is pretended heir to the throne of France." At the same time a description of d'Antraigues was sent to all the frontier places, including Trieste, with directions to have him arrested.

On 16th May d'Antraigues left Venice in the suite of the Russian Minister. For the first few days all went well. At the French posts the travellers were allowed to pass, and were even treated with attention. This reception led them to think they could safely stay at Trieste, which place they entered on the evening of Sunday, 21st May. When, however, their carriage stopped before the principal hotel, in the large square of Trieste, it was surrounded by soldiers, and Mordninov and his suite had to alight, and were instantly brought before General Bernadotte, the Governor of the province.

Some Royalist writers, in the accounts which they have given of what ensued, have accused Bernadotte of saying, when the Count pleaded the law of nations and his diplomatic character, that "there was no longer any question of justice and reason, but only the right of the stronger." Fortunately everyone can judge for himself how far the accusation is well founded, because Mordninov, immediately after the incident, sent to his Government the following report of the dialogue between himself and Bernadotte:—

General Bernadotte (turning to Mordninov): "Are you, sir, the Russian Minister at Venice?"

Mordninov: "Yes, sir, as my passports show, and I protest against the indignity with which I have been treated in defiance of the law of nations."

General Bernadotte: "Although you are the Minister of a Power which is the enemy of the French Republic, you will be treated with all the respect which the circumstances allow. But there is, I believe, in your suite a person, who is under the suspicion of my Government. Will you be so good as to tell me the official position of the gentlemen who compose your suite?"

Mordninov: "I have with me a Councillor, and a Secretary of Legation, an Attaché, and a Major."

General Bernadotte (pointing to d'Antraigues): "I must request you, sir, to tell me the name of that gentleman."

Mordninov: "I would deem myself wanting in respect to my own Court if I concealed the name of a gentleman attached to my mission by the express order of my Sovereign. That, sir, is the Count d'Antraigues, for whom I claim the respect, which the law of nations accords to all the members of a public mission."

General Bernadotte: "But, sir, the law of nations has no application to Count d'Antraigues, who is said to be the agent of Louis XVIII., our enemy, and in consequence I declare that he is under arrest. If

he had been the stronger, he would have had us all shot; now that we are the stronger here, we exercise the right of the stronger."

Mordninov: "Since you yourself declare that you are using the right of the stronger, I have nothing to do except to repeat my protest against the way in which I am being treated. In arresting M. d'Antraigues you are wanting in respect to the Sovereign who placed him on my staff. My official passport does not except any of the staff of my Legation, and I must send a courier to His Majesty the Emperor of Russia to inform him of what has happened."

General Bernadotte: "I have only to say that, so far as the arrest of M. d'Antraigues is concerned, I carry it out under the express order of my Government. So far as you are personally concerned, I have directed that suitable lodgings shall be supplied to you and your suite, and you are at liberty to remain here, or to continue your journey, as you think fit."

It will be observed that Bernadotte did not say that there was "no longer any question of justice and reason," as was alleged against him. But his reference to the "right of the stronger" naturally exposed him to misunderstanding and misrepresentation. In a rough Gascon form he was reminding Mordninov of that rude law of men and of nations, which Lord Morley has recently alluded to as "the mighty fundamental that the State is force."[a] It is admitted by d'Antraigues that Bernadotte treated him with courtesy and consideration both at Trieste and in the arrangements which were made for his journey to Bonaparte's head-quarters.

D'Antraigues was conveyed to Milan, and, in a few days, was safely lodged in that city under Bonaparte's immediate observation. Some suspicion was aroused that Bonaparte came to an understanding with his prisoner, which was not removed when

[a] *Politics and History*, 93.

d'Antraigues, after a brief detention, was allowed to escape. In the meantime there was discovered—either in his portfolio, or in a packet which was posted by him from Milan, and seized by Bonaparte's orders—some damning evidence of the treachery of General Pichegru, the leader of the moderate or reactionary party in France. The incriminating document is said to have consisted of a résumé of a conversation between d'Antraigues and another Royalist agent, Montgaillard, in the course of which Pichegru was mentioned as having bargained for the restoration of the Bourbons. Pichegru was to receive, as his reward, the Castle of Chambord, a million, a house in Paris, the exemption of his native district from taxation for fifteen years, a pension for his wife, and an annuity for his descendants until the extinction of his line. This document was sent by Bonaparte to the Directory on 3rd July, and was used afterwards as a justification for the *coup d'état* of the 18th Fructidor (4th September).

There was, in this incident, an element of romance, which deserves to be rescued from oblivion. D'Antraigues was accompanied by a lady known as Madame de St. Huberty. She had been an opera singer, to whom d'Antraigues had been privately married in the year 1790. The marriage had been kept secret for family reasons; but d'Antraigues now found it convenient to acknowledge her as his wife, in order to obtain leave for her to accompany him to Milan. It's an ill wind that blows nobody some good, and Madame de St. Huberty owed her recognition as the Countess d'Antraigues to the circumstance of her husband's arrest by Bernadotte.[a]

[a] The materials for this chapter include *Un agent secret sous la Révolution, le Comte d'Antraigues*, par Léonce Pingaud; *Corr. inéd. de Mallet du Pan*, 338; Bourrienne, i. 351; *Corr. de N.* iii., 1861, 1885, 1982.

CHAPTER XL

BERNADOTTE'S ADMINISTRATIVE AND MILITARY ACTIVITY AS GOVERNOR OF FRIULI—HIS INTERVIEW WITH THIÉBAULT

MAY–JUNE 1797

"Bernadotte expressed his regret at not having an A.D.C.'s place to offer me. . . . I should not have hesitated to attach myself to Bernadotte, but . . . everybody was bidding for me, except the one to whom I would have knocked myself down."—THIÉBAULT.

THE position of military governor of a conquered province was a delicate one. Bernadotte appears, in the first instance, on 27th May, to have issued an order which offended local public opinion, and Bonaparte wrote, directing him to let the lay municipalities send one or two deputies to Udine as a provisional arrangement.[a] When Bonaparte proceeded to prescribe institutions for Friuli, he adopted the characteristic course of resting Revolutionary forms upon the secure, if incongruous, basis of the nomination of so-called popular representatives by the general in command. It is easy to see that the democratic tinge, which was given to this new order of things, was a transparent sham, and that they resolved themselves into administration by a military chief.

Two incidents, which occurred shortly after the return to Italy of the French army, will serve as illustrations of Bernadotte's attitude towards the province, of which he was the military governor. On 2nd June Napoleon ordered him to put certain fortresses in a state of defence. This proceeding was intended as a demonstration to affect

[a] *Corr. de N.* iii., 1058.

the pending negotiations, and was followed by the sending of cannon to these places. Bernadotte, in the course of the duty thus assigned to him, was obliged, upon the advice of his engineers, to demolish two villages. At the same time some stores of salt, which had been seized during the recent campaign, had to be distributed or disposed of; and he was asked how they were to be dealt with. Without hesitation he ordered the salt to be sold, and the proceeds to be applied for the relief of the dispossessed villagers.

He showed his good feeling in another direction. During his occupation of Friuli, some Venetians offered to join the French, and to form volunteer battalions. Bernadotte knew that the preliminaries of Leoben provided for the handing over of the Venetian States to Austria, and, without giving his reasons, he dissuaded the Venetian volunteers from a course, which might be so injurious to them in future contingencies.

During his residence at Udine, Bernadotte was indefatigable in the training of his troops. He used to hold grand manœuvres twice a week in a large plain in the neighbourhood of Udine.[a] In so doing, he was both carrying out the instructions of Bonaparte, and giving effect to his habitual practice and to his inclination. His officers and men had a little too much of these peaceful exercises, and would have preferred to be allowed to enjoy the pleasures of Udine, which was by no means a disagreeable place to be quartered in.

There was a Spanish fleet in the Gulf of Venice, and the Admiral Marquis de Spinola, who came from Trieste to pay a visit to Bernadotte, took pleasure in accompanying him on these long field-

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 113.

days, at one of which a prominent general of brigade —no less a personage than the distinguished General Friant—made a mistake in his movements. Bernadotte instantly ordered him under arrest, and the general at once gave up his sword and returned to Udine. It is probable that Friant was not sorry to escape the rest of the day's hard work, and, being accustomed to Bernadotte's gasconades, thought very little of the occurrence. The Spanish admiral, however, was astonished, and could talk of nothing else than this extraordinary scene; and he was still more surprised that it was not followed by a duel. Sarrazin, who records the incident, says that neither Masséna nor Augereau would have dared to treat one of their brigadiers in this fashion.[a]

Some fifteen years afterwards, General Friant had his revenge, because it fell to him, in 1812, to take possession of Swedish Pomerania on behalf of the French Government, and to oblige his old commander to surrender one of the provinces of the kingdom, of which he was then Crown Prince.

As it sometimes helps one to understand the personality of an historical character, when we have the testimony of someone who met him and conversed with him, we may here quote a passage from the memoirs of General Thiébault, then a young officer in Masséna's army, who gives the following account of a meeting with Bernadotte at Udine:—

"I went to pay my respects to General Bernadotte. He received me very well, and was kind enough to make me dine with him. After dinner, in a burst of confidence which touched me very much, and which I feel it an honour to remember, he had a private and confidential talk with me over all matters relating to the situation of France. As he reckoned

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 113.

up all the dangers which still threatened her political existence and her internal happiness, he was moved to tears. That moment, in which he showed the purity of his aims, the loftiness of his devotion, his unlikeness to so many other commanders with whom one could have reckoned only their own military glory, their own ambition, their own convenience, their own future, raised in me an admiration for him which I must confess later events may seem hardly to have justified. Bernadotte expressed his regret at not having an aide-de-camp's place to offer me, but, at a word from him, General de Beaumont offered me a place on his staff. I should not have hesitated to attach myself to Bernadotte, but I did not accept de Beaumont's offer. Bernadotte's good opinion also led General Dugua of the cavalry to ask me to become an assistant on his staff in view of the early promotion of one of his aides-de-camp. I laugh sometimes to think how I had the air of being put up to auction during the two days I spent at Udine. Everybody was bidding for me, except the one to whom I would have knocked myself down."[a]

Thiébault's testimony accords with the impressions, which Bernadotte seems to have created, wherever he held any post of civil or military authority. His personality sometimes roused distrust among his superiors, and often excited jealousy among his rivals; but he hardly ever failed to attract his subordinates, and to win their loyal devotion and obedience.

[a] Thiébault (E.), i. 325, 326.

CHAPTER XLI

BERNADOTTE'S FIRST RELATION WITH POLITICS—THE ADDRESSES SENT BY THE ARMY OF ITALY TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORY—BERNADOTTE'S INDEPENDENT ACTION

JULY 1797

"Bernadotte, était-ce instinct de roi latent? se montra seul modéré."—ALBERT SOREL, *L'Europe et la Révolution française*, v. 213.

THE establishment of the Executive Directory as the Government of France, in October 1795, has been described in a previous chapter,[a] where it was pointed out that it was inevitable that the periodical renewal of the two Legislative Chambers, by the annual retirement of one-third of their members, would sooner or later lead to a constitutional crisis and to a military intervention. The crisis came in the summer of 1797, when, after the May elections, the majority of the Council of 500 assumed a moderate or Royalist complexion, and proceeded to the election of a President.

The two candidates for the Presidency of the Council of 500 were General Jourdan, who was a Republican, and in favour of maintaining the existing Constitution, and General Pichegru, who figured as the leader of the reactionary or Royalist party, and was, behind the scenes, engaged in a treasonable correspondence with the exiled "King" and the Bourbon princes. General Pichegru was elected President by a large majority; but he was in a perilous position,

[a] Chapter XXII., page 121 *supra*.

because his treason might be discovered at any moment, and he was a general without an army.

Soon after the election of Pichegru as President of the Council of 500, the time came round for one of the five directors to retire, and for the legislative bodies to appoint a successor. They selected Barthélemy, a man of reactionary sympathies. The Directory were now divided among themselves. Two of them—Carnot and Barthélemy—sympathised with the majority of the Legislative Councils, and were opposed to all the extreme tendencies of the Revolution. The other three—Barras, Rewbell, and Larevellière-Lépeaux—were convinced and determined Republicans of the most advanced type. They formed a majority of the Executive, and were nicknamed the Triumvirs; but it was a majority of one, which would disappear upon the occurrence of the next vacancy. Under these circumstances the existing Revolutionary Government hung by a single and a slender thread, and could not be maintained, unless the Triumvirs used their expiring powers to purge the legislature by means of some desperate *coup d'état*.

The Government, not having any moral support in the Chambers or in the country, was compelled to turn to the army for encouragement and assistance; and, so far as the army of Italy was concerned, they did not turn in vain. Bonaparte had every motive to support them at this moment.[a] The Moderate or Royalist party were bitterly opposed to his policy in Italy; and, in the course of the pending negotiations with Austria, upon which depended all the fruits of his Italian campaigns, Bonaparte's hands were weakened by the notoriety of the fact that a

[a] *Cambridge Modern History*, viii. 508.

majority in the Legislative Councils was opposed to the foreign policy of the Directory. Besides, Bonaparte's ultimate aims and ambitions moved him to prop up the falling Government. He was resolved that nobody should upset them, until he was in a position to do so himself. A military *coup d'état* was the very thing to suit his plans. It would be a precedent for the *coup d'état* on his own account, of which he was already dreaming.

In order to cow the opposition and to give to the Triumvirs some semblance of public support, Bonaparte now proceeded to have addresses drawn up on 14th July, by the different divisions of the army of Italy, to be sent to the Government and to be published on the 10th of August, the anniversary of the abolition of royalty. The addresses were to breathe fire and fury against the Royalist party, to denounce them as conspirators, and to threaten them in unambiguous terms with military violence.

The Generals Masséna, Serrurier, Joubert, and Augereau did not hesitate to comply with Bonaparte's orders, and drew up addresses of the most uncompromising character, which they obediently forwarded to Bonaparte to be despatched by him to Paris.[a]

On this occasion Bernadotte displayed an independence and a moderation, which were singular in a man hitherto unversed in public affairs. Bonaparte sent to him copies of the addresses of the other generals, so that he might have a similar manifesto forwarded from his division. Bernadotte sent word to Bonaparte that in his opinion such a step was an infraction of the Constitution and of good order, and that he did not think that a commander-in-chief had any power to give him

[a] Dry, ii. 336.

directions on such a subject. Bonaparte replied that his refusal would cause a belief that there was a disagreement among the generals, and that the enemies of the Republic would make capital out of it. Bernadotte yielded to these considerations; but he declined to endorse the addresses of his colleagues, and the address from his own division was framed upon different and relatively moderate lines. The signatories to it declared that they doubted the existence of a Royalist conspiracy, but they offered their arms to the Directory if it should turn out that such a conspiracy existed.[a] We cannot do better than compare Bernadotte's address on this occasion with a passage from the address drawn up by Augereau. They will illustrate the difference between Bernadotte's attitude and that of the other generals of the day, and perhaps they will help us to understand why his success was more enduring than theirs.

"To the Executive Directory.

"Rumours of counter-revolution are heard on all sides, to which the men, whom I command, refuse to give the slightest credence; but, if they turn out to be true, if conspirators have planned to lay a sacrilegious hand on the Government which is the safeguard of the laws and the sentinel of the people, then be assured that there still exist the arms, which have served the cause of national independence, and the chiefs, who have led the phalanxes of the Republic. With such supports as these you have only to express the wish in order that the enemies of the State and of liberty may disappear.

"J. B. Bernadotte."

We may compare with this the following passage in Augereau's address:—

[a] *Victoires, Conquêtes*, viii. 168; *Moniteur* (25 Therm.), 12th August 1797.

GENERAL MASSÉNA.
"The spoiled child of Victory."
Who became a Marshal of France, Duke of Rivoli, and Prince of Essling.
After the portrait by Charpentier.

GENERAL AUGEREAU.
"The 'sword' of the 18th Fructidor."
Who became a Marshal of France and Duke of Castiglione.
After the portrait by Hilaire Le Dru.

To face page 240.

"O conspirators," it ran, "tremble. There is only one step from the Adige and the Rhine to the Seine. Your iniquities are numbered, and their recompense is to be found at the points of our bayonets."[a]

Not only did Bernadotte frame an address on his own lines, but he forwarded it direct from himself to the Government in Paris, sending a copy to Bonaparte, who had been the medium of forwarding all the other addresses, thus doubly dissociating himself from the action of his colleagues.[b]

This incident did not cause any immediate breach between Bonaparte and Bernadotte; but it marks a stage in the history of their relations with each other. Since their first meeting in March there had been signs of divergence of temperament and of methods. But there had not been any open disagreement. This appears to have been the first occasion upon which Bonaparte was afforded grounds for apprehending any danger to his own policy and plans from the personality of Bernadotte. It was made clear to him that there was one general in his army, who had a mind and a will of his own, and on occasions might have to be counted with.

The difference between Bernadotte's address and those of the other generals did not escape notice in Paris. A Royalist, or Moderate journal, *Le Grondeur*, referred to it, and claimed Bernadotte as a sympathiser with their party. He repudiated the suggestion in a letter, which was thought of sufficient importance to be translated and copied into the London *Morning Chronicle* of 6th September 1797 :—

[a] *Victoires, Conquêtes*, viii. 168; *Moniteur* (25 Therm.), 12th August 1797.

[b] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 117.

"TO THE EDITOR OF 'LE GRONDEUR.'

"You say, sir, in your journal, that I have not signed the addresses which the army of Italy have transmitted to the Directory; permit me to correct this error. I have signed that in which the wish of my division, which is also my own wish, is expressed.

"I desire, sir, that you will honour me with perpetual oblivion; my opinion and yours do not accord. A Republican, both by principle and conviction, I will, to the moment of my death, oppose all Royalists and enemies to the Directory. If moderation has ever been the rule of my conduct, it is because a life almost entirely dedicated to military labours has compelled me to submit to the duties of my station; but whenever the enemies of my Government and of the Republic are to be opposed, I shall place myself in the front rank of the defenders of the Government and the Republic, and shall call to my assistance those brave men who have so often heard my voice in the field of glory.

"BERNADOTTE."

Such was the first connection of Bernadotte with politics. It is obvious that he was not in the secrets of the politicians, and that his action had no serious influence upon the course of events. But the incident serves to remind us that his Gascon turgidity concealed a relative moderation, a quick discernment, and a sanity of judgment which raised him above his colleagues, and prompts so serious a writer as Albert Sorel to ask the question, "Était-ce instinct de roi latent?"[a]

[a] Sorel, v. 213.

CHAPTER XLII

BERNADOTTE'S MISSION TO PARIS ON THE EVE OF THE COUP D'ÉTAT OF FRUCTIDOR

JULY–AUGUST, 1797

"I now send you, by General Bernadotte, the other banners which had been left by mistake at Peschiera. That excellent general, who has made his reputation on the banks of the Rhine, is to-day one of the officers who are most necessary to the glory of the army of Italy. . . . On every occasion they (Bernadotte and his division) have overthrown whatever was opposed to them. At the passage of Tagliamento and at the capture of Gradisca they have shown that courage and that zeal for military glory which distinguish the armies of the Republic. You see in General Bernadotte one of the foremost friends of the Republic, incapable alike by his principles and by his character of sacrificing the cause of liberty or the obligations of honour."—*Bonaparte's letter to the Directory, 9th August 1797.*

THE incident, described in the preceding chapter, took place in the middle of July; and before the end of that month, Bonaparte sent Bernadotte to Paris for the ostensible purpose of carrying to the Directory some flags, which had been taken in the previous year at the battle of Rivoli, and had not been yet transmitted to the Government.

As the scene of action now shifts to Paris, let us note the course of events which, in the capital, were rapidly nearing a catastrophe.

We have seen, in the preceding chapters, that the Triumvirs—Barras, Rewbell, and Larevellière-Lépeaux, who formed the majority of the five directors, were faced by a hostile Legislature, headed by General Pichegru, the president of the Council of 500. How were the Triumvirs to preserve power? Nay, more,

how were they to save their necks? Before the end of June they had made up their minds that there was no way out of the *impasse*, save a military *coup d'état*. Their resolve had been confirmed, and their hands had been strengthened, by obtaining the evidence of General Pichegru's treachery, which was found among Comte d'Antraigues' papers, and by the receipt of the addresses from the army of Italy.

At first, they were disposed to look to General Hoche. But this plan miscarried, and Hoche retired to Germany, to end his life in a few weeks. Hoche's name is familiar to us on account of his abortive expedition to Ireland; but his life would repay close study. His rapid rise in the army, his imprisonment under the Terror, his pacification of La Vendée, his gallant and striking personality, and his early and mysterious death, render his career an interesting and pathetic one.

Hoche having failed them, they tried Masséna, who shrank from civil strife, and declined the task. Then they turned to Bonaparte, and invited him to send them the General best suited for the purpose. Accordingly, before the end of July, Bonaparte despatched General Augereau to Paris, ostensibly to permit him to attend to his private affairs,[a] but really to place him at the disposal of the Triumvirs for the purpose of the projected *coup d'état*.

Bonaparte had already (11th July) sent to Paris his aide-de-camp Lavalette, a man of moderate views, who was in touch with Carnot and the reactionary party.[b] Augereau and Lavalette were both in correspondence with Bonaparte. Augereau

[a] *Corr. de N.* iii., 2043.

[b] *Corr. de N.* xxix., 305; Barante, ii. 333, 339; Bourrienne, i. 236.

objected to Lavalette's presence, and Lavalette imagined that Bonaparte had sent Augereau merely to get rid of him. In this way, Bonaparte had agents in both camps, and was prepared to take advantage of whatever turn circumstances might take. He now sent a third emissary of a different type.

Various theories have been put forward as to Bonaparte's exact reasons for sending Bernadotte to Paris at this moment.[a] Was it as another counterpoise to Augereau? Bernadotte was more moderate than Augereau, but more pronounced in his Republicanism than Lavalette. Bonaparte was not above taking care to be represented in every camp. Was it as a substitute for Augereau, in the event of that general becoming impossible? We shall find that the Government would have employed Bernadotte as a substitute, if the wary Gascon had been willing. Was it to get rid of an independent subordinate from the army of Italy? Was it to compromise him in the approaching *coup d'état*? These and other reasons have been suggested; and perhaps they all found a place in Bonaparte's mysterious mind. On one point everyone is agreed: the sending of a remnant of flags was not the real occasion of his mission.[a]

The opportunity of visiting the capital was agreeable to Bernadotte himself. That he had for some time been anxious to pay a visit to Paris we know from several sources. After the peace of Leoben he had requested leave for that purpose, but the general-in-chief had on 18th May written in reply that it was impossible at that time.[b] He had also confided the same wish to the members of his

[a] Jung, iii. 205; Lafosse, i. 139, 140; Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 117; Ségur, i. 334; Pingaud, 14.

[b] *Corr. de N.* iii., 1808.

staff. There was nothing unreasonable in such a desire. In April, after the peace of Leoben, Masséna had carried to the Government the preliminary articles of peace. On 3rd June, General Serrurier had been the bearer of banners to be presented to the Directory. Augereau was now paying his second official visit to the capital. Joubert and other generals had all been sent in the same way.[a] Accordingly, if Bernadotte wished to go to Paris, it was his turn to do so.

The following extract from a letter written to the chief of his staff shows that Bernadotte started in a frame of mind, friendly and grateful to Bonaparte, who had done all in his power to ensure for Bernadotte a distinguished welcome :—

"MILAN, *9th Thermidor, 5th Republican Year* (*10th August* 1797).

. . . . . .

"I shall start in two hours for Paris. The commander-in-chief behaved very well to me. He has ordered me to carry five stands of colours to Paris, and has paid me the expenses of my journey. . . .

"I recommend thee to take care of the division, and to look well after its subsistence. The commander-in-chief has promised to come to our help. I remitted to him the letter of the Central Government of Udine. He has assured me that he will do all he possibly can to diminish the charges of that country. The circumstances are such that the troops must live on the countries they occupy; nevertheless, the commander-in-chief is determined to do all he can in favour of Friuli. Inform the President of this. . . .

"The commander-in-chief has given orders that the hospitals may be more carefully attended to; he has created three general inspectors for that purpose. . . .

"J. BERNADOTTE."[b]

[a] *Corr. de N.* iii., April–July 1797.

[b] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 116, 117.

This letter illustrates the attention which Bernadotte always paid to the protection of conquered countries, the subsistence of his troops, and the details of military and local administration. It also seems to indicate that although, as we know, he had begun to suspect Bonaparte's ambition, and Bonaparte had begun to dislike his independence, the two men were from different motives in political sympathy at this particular time, and that no breach had yet occurred.

The following was the letter in which Bonaparte announced Bernadotte's mission to the Directory:—

"MILAN, *22nd Thermidor, Year V.*
(*9th August* 1797).

"I announced to you after the battle of Rivoli the capture of twenty-one banners, and I sent you fifteen or sixteen. I now send you by General Bernadotte the others, which had been left by mistake at Peschiera. That excellent general, who has made his reputation on the banks of the Rhine, is to-day one of the officers who are most necessary to the glory of the army of Italy. He commands the three divisions which are on the frontiers of Austria, and I beg of you to be so good as to send him back as soon as possible to the army of Italy. I cannot allow the opportunity to pass of expressing the tribute of praise which I owe to the services of his brave division, and of the troops which came from the Rhine and the Sambre and Meuse to the army of Italy. On every occasion they have overthrown whatever was opposed to them. At the passage of the Tagliamento and at the capture of Gradisca they have shown that courage and that zeal for military glory which distinguish the armies of the Republic. You see in General Bernadotte one of the foremost friends of the Republic, incapable alike by his principles and by his character of sacrificing the cause of liberty or the obligations of honour."[a]

[a] *Corr. de N.* iii., 2083.

Bernadotte left Udine on 30th July and proceeded to Milan, where he spent a few days with General Bonaparte, who seems to have taken pains to show him every mark of favour and consideration, and to send him to Paris in a grateful and friendly mood towards himself. He gave him the instructions, which commanders-in-chief usually give on such occasions —namely, to use all his efforts to get reinforcements. He was to ask General Kellermann, who was at Chambéry, on the French side of the Alps, to send all the men he could spare, and he was to use all his influence with the Government in Paris to forward more troops without delay. Bernadotte was also instructed to keep his commander-in-chief fully informed of the situation of affairs in the provinces and at the capital.

Bernadotte left Milan on 9th August. After crossing the Alps, he stayed with General Kellermann at Chambéry, and during his journey he appears to have made careful inquiries and observations as to the state of public feeling in the provinces of France, which he afterwards embodied in a letter to Bonaparte. He was in Paris on or before the 20th of August.

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CHAPTER XLIII

BERNADOTTE'S RECEPTION BY THE DIRECTORY

AUGUST 21–30, 1797

"Paris is a horrible place for a man of honour. I am already wearied to death of it. . . . I salute you, and I love you as much as I esteem you."—*Bernadotte to Bonaparte, 21st August 1797.*

"Equally famous on the banks of the Rhine and of the Tagliamento."—*The President of the Directory to Bernadotte, 28th August 1797.*

IN Paris Bernadotte found his old friend General Kléber, at whose house he met several of his former comrades. He was also admitted to the *salon* of Madame de Staël, where he made the acquaintance of Benjamin Constant, and the brilliant group known as "the constitutional circle," of which Madame de Staël was the high-priestess. It acted as a counterpoise to the "Clichian circle," which was the social organisation and rendezvous of the Royalist party.[a]

The following letter, written to Bonaparte on 21st August, probably reflects the political views of the *salon* of Madame de Staël and the military gossip, picked up at Kléber's house. The friendly tone of the letter was sincere enough; for we know from several sources that, wherever he went, he expressed admiration for his commander-in-chief, General Bonaparte.

"PARIS, *4th of Fructidor, Year V.*
(*21st August* 1797).

"TO GENERAL BONAPARTE.

"On my journey to Paris I saw at Chambéry General Kellermann. I gave him your message. . . .

[a] Norvins, *Histoire de France*, 417.

In the provinces I found the Republican spirit decidedly lukewarm. Since my former journey across France the counter-revolution had made way. The laws are feebly administered. The *émigrés* are returning. The courts either acquit them, or abstain from proceeding against them.

"I hear from several deputies that there is in the Council of 500 a party bent on re-establishing Royalty. There is another party meditating some active movement for the purpose of counteracting the Royalist faction. If they carry out their intention, there will be a terrible commotion, and those at the head of the movement will not be able to control it. Between these two extremes there are men who fear anarchy as much as Royalism. These say little, and keep in the background, but they are waiting for the fitting moment to crush both anarchists and Royalists, by pitting them against each other. These men try to smooth matters, so as to gain time, in the hope that the Government may be able to consolidate its strength and resources. The Council of 500 are afraid of the directors, who have the upper hand of them. But, in order to maintain the upper hand, the directors must seize and create their opportunities, and, by their attitude, overawe those members of the Council of 500, who are working with unparalleled audacity for the re-establishment of the throne.

"The hopes of these gentry are fixed on Pichegru. They flatter, cajole, pamper, and fool him; but, as a matter of fact, I believe that those, who put him forward, know well that he is a very ordinary man. Pichegru has the baseness to abandon the cause of the Republicans. He places men before principles. Efforts have been made to reclaim him, but they were in vain. When pressed to explain himself, he has given foolish and illogical answers, with the tone of a man swollen with pride, who has brought himself to think that his name is worth an army. Poor man, how weak he is! The ice is broken. His true character is known. His old friends desert him. Every day he is losing his colossal reputation. I saw him at Kléber's, with several generals of the army of the North. I hardly spoke to him. I have no doubt he was well aware of the opinion, which I

have expressed about him. We showed the utmost reserve towards each other.

"Three generals are mentioned for the command of the guard of the Council of 500—Kléber, Desaix, and Serrurier. Everybody agrees that such a command would be a poor compliment to any of these three generals. . . . Kléber will not accept such a post. A philosophic Republican, he laughs at the weakness of one party and at the strength of the other. But if the occasion arises, Kléber will make his choice between the two parties, and will range himself on the side of the tricolour. He wishes to see the scenes of our glory. I will take him with me, and he will be enchanted to know the man, whose exploits on the battlefield, and still more in the sphere of government, he has so often admired.

"Paris is a horrible place for a man of honour. I am already wearied to death of it, and I shall soon leave it. I shall do my best to send you cavalry, and, if it is possible, the division of General Richepanse. Carnot is convinced that, if there is a renewal of war, you must have reinforcements. I shall speak about it to-morrow to Barras and to Rewbell.

"I salute you, and love you as I esteem you.[a]

"BERNADOTTE."

The sending of Bernadotte to Paris, at this particular moment, seems to have puzzled and perplexed General Augereau, who had been appointed governor, and commander-in-chief of the garrison, of Paris, and was expecting orders to execute the contemplated *coup d'état*. He was heard to express the opinion that Bernadotte's presence in Paris was unnecessary, and that the commander-in-chief ought to have known that the only possible saviours of the State were "Bonaparte in Italy and Augereau at Paris."[b] On the 24th August he wrote to Bonaparte, a letter in which the following passage occurs: "General Bernadotte arrived here three days ago, and has been received with demonstrations of surprise

[a] *Corr. inéd. de N.* vi., 114–117; Sorel, v. 220. [b] Bourr. i. 246.

and fear. Meanwhile, he has seen Pichegru, Kléber, and the Minister of War. He seems anxious to return soon. I do not know the motives which have brought him to Paris, or whether he will remain long. The patriots see him with pleasure. I am glad to believe that he has justified by his conduct the good opinion they have formed of him."

On the 23rd August Bernadotte dined with General Scherer, the Minister of War. Thibaudeau, who was present, says that Bernadotte joined with Kléber in denouncing the reactionary majority in the Council of 500 for their hostility to the army; and that he criticised the addresses of the other generals of the army of Italy, and plumed himself upon the independence and moderation of his own address.[a]

On the 27th August Bernadotte was received in solemn audience by the directors, and formally presented to them the banners from the army of Italy, of which he was the bearer. It was his duty to accompany the presentation of the banners by a speech, and, in discharging this function, he showed considerable adroitness. The address, which he delivered, advocated peace; carefully avoided any direct allusion to the political crisis of the moment; and referred, in rather vague terms, to the external rather than the internal enemies of the Republic. Barras, who as one of the directors was present on the occasion, says that "Bernadotte presented the banners with the modesty and unassuming bearing ever characteristic of him throughout life."[b] He tempered the modesty of his personal bearing by plenty of Gascon bravado; and made up for the comparative moderation of his language by his declamatory tones, his fiery glances, and his dramatic gestures.[c]

[a] Dry, ii. 343; Sorel, v. 220. [b] Barras, iii. 6. [c] Barante, ii. 370.

In this way he appears to have succeeded in pleasing almost everybody.

The following is a sample of the address which Bernadotte delivered on this occasion :—

"Supreme Depositaries of the Laws, rest assured of the respect and constitutional obedience of the soldiers of the country, and continue to excite the admiration of Europe. Suppress the factions and the factious. Complete the great work of Peace. Humanity appeals to you that the torrents of blood may cease to flow. But if, counting on our internal divisions, and still more on their understanding with the deserters from the cause of liberty, if, I say, our enemies form exaggerated demands, we shall take up our arms again, and march to battle with all the dread panoply of war, putting our trust in the justice of our cause, and preceded by the auguries of victory."[a]

The President of the Directory, Larevellière-Lépeaux, in his reply, seized the opportunity of indulging in a violent manifesto against the Royalist party, which was couched in such menacing terms as to be generally regarded as a prelude to some act of violence. Larevellière-Lépeaux boasted that his utterances on this occasion "avaient rompu la glace."[b] We need not rescue them from a well-deserved oblivion, except to quote the concluding observations of the President, which were personal to Bernadotte himself :—

"Such, brave general, are the sentiments which animate the Executive Directory. . . . How agreeable it is for the directors to have, as interpreter between them and the defenders of the country, one of those illustrious generals who has so often led them to victory, one whose name is equally famous on the banks of the Rhine and of the Tagliamento! How pleasing it is for me to be the mouthpiece of my colleagues, for the purpose of expressing their gratitude to your intrepid comrades and to you, and to be able to press to my heart the brave General Bernadotte."[a]

[a] *Moniteur*, 30th August 1797. [b] Lépeaux, ii. 126.

Barras has given an account of this ceremony. Deeply involved as he was in the impending *coup d'état*, he regarded Bernadotte's attitude as timid and irresolute, and he takes pleasure in describing the annoyance of the Gascon general, when the President at the close of his violent manifesto accorded him an affectionate embrace. The other Triumvirs, Rewbell and Barras, then proceeded to invite him to dinner in a manner which seemed publicly to mark him as their friend. Barras adds: "Rewbell and I enjoyed a laugh at seeing how impossible it was for him to decline our invitations."[a]

On the other hand, Bernadotte's moderation seems to have been appreciated in more quarters than one. Evidence of the appreciation is to be found in the French Revolution tracts, which are preserved in the British Museum. One of these tracts, dated the 31st August, four days after the ceremony, and written from the point of view of the constitutional group, which repudiated Royalism but was opposed to the tyrannical policy of the Revolutionary Government, condemned the violent speech of the President of the Directory, describing it as an incitement to civil war, but praised Bernadotte's address in the following terms :—

"We must add that the spirit which dictated the discourse of the President . . . was entirely absent from that of General Bernadotte. That general showed himself worthy of the reputation which he enjoys. He has dared to risk dismissal, because he has expressed his preference for peace at home and abroad, and has actually gone so far as to say that he only promises a constitutional obedience."[b]

It appears from the following passage in the *Clef du Cabinet* of 30th August that this ceremony was the

[a] Barras, iii. 6. [b] *Fr. Rev. Tracts*, Brit. Mus., 117 (18 Fruct. An. V.).

occasion of a *rapprochement* between Bernadotte and Augereau :—

"At the public sitting of the Directory we saw Generals Bernadotte and Augereau show, by the demonstrations of mutual cordiality, that the reports which have appeared in the newspapers are false. The reception, which they gave each other on this occasion, is an example of the unity which prevails among all the brave defenders of our country, and testifies to the community of sentiment which animates them for the defence of liberty."[a]

Augereau, in a letter to Bonaparte of 28th August, refers to Bernadotte's speech and says that it was full of energy, "and that it evoked frequent applause in the hall."[b] He had perhaps realised that there was no danger of Bernadotte's ousting him from the principal rôle in the approaching *coup d'état*. Bernadotte had no ambition for that rôle. Barante, the historian of the Directory, in drawing a comparison between Augereau and Bernadotte, remarks that Bernadotte "avait plus de lumières, plus d'esprit de conduite, un caractère plus elevé."[c]

[a] *La Clef du Cabinet*, 30th August 1797.
[b] *Corr. inéd. de N.* iv., 123.
[c] Barante, ii. 341.

CHAPTER XLIV

THE COUP D'ÉTAT OF THE 18TH FRUCTIDOR

SEPTEMBER 4, 1797

"Farewell, my General. Enjoy the delights of life. Do not poison your existence with melancholy thoughts. The eyes of the Republicans are turned towards you. They press your image to their hearts. Royalists look at it with respect and awe. My friendship for you is unchangeable."—*From Bernadotte to Bonaparte, 1st September 1797.*

THE Triumvirs did not take Bernadotte into the secret of the contemplated revolution; but they consulted a few trusty sympathisers, including Fouché, who was at this time beginning to make his influence felt in public affairs. In the consultations, which ensued, there was a division of opinion. It was obvious that a trial according to due process of law was the just and proper way of dealing with a conspiracy, if conspiracy there was; and this course was advocated by some of the consultants. But Fouché met these scruples in a spirit of characteristic effrontery, by putting a question, which under the circumstances, was unanswerable. "Where," he said, "are you to find proofs or judges? The accused will soon become the accusers. Public opinion is in too bad a state to admit of such a perilous undertaking."[a] This view prevailed, and it was resolved that the only way of saving the directorial constitution was to violate it. The *coup d'état* of the 18th Fructidor has never been defended upon any other than these cynical grounds.

Although Bernadotte was not in the secret of the Triumvirs, the following letter shows that he knew that

[a] *Fouché*, par Madelin, i., 211.

some strong action might be imminent. No navigator of the political waters, however inexperienced, could fail to realise that the rapids were near.

"PARIS, 15*th Fructidor, Year V.*
(1*st September* 1797).

"TO THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

"The Directory has received me at a public audience. The speeches which were delivered have reanimated the Republicans. I send you a report of them, although I dare say you have already received one.

"The Royalist party has changed its tactics. It no longer dares to tilt against the Directory. Yet, in my opinion, it should be pursued and denounced, in order that the patriots may be able to direct public opinion on wise and prudent lines, and thus to ensure the results of the coming elections. But, in order to succeed in that task, wisdom and prudence are necessary. Any violent and ill-directed movement must necessarily be fatal to liberty, because the abuses of power always increase, when the will of individuals is substituted for the law of the land. We are in danger of being obliged to invest the Depositaries of the Law with a consular power, and to declare the temporary suspension of the two other authorities of the State. I sincerely desire that these troubles may be composed to the advantage of my country and to the satisfaction of the Republicans. At present the Republic seems like a young colt, which prances and bounds after having been kept too long in the stable. I can plainly see that the addresses from the army have reawakened the patriotism of certain timorous and faint-hearted men. Nay, more, that clear and formal pronouncement of opinion has terrified the partisans of Royalty, who believed that they could quietly bring about a counter-revolution and load us all with chains. I cannot help laughing at the folly of these men. They must indeed know little of the commanders of our armies, and of the armies themselves, if they hope to muzzle them so easily, and if they believe that we can be led away by orators more or less learned or more or less venal. These deputies, who speak with

such impertinence, are far from dreaming that we could enslave Europe, if you wished to form the project.

"Although it is rumoured here that you have concluded a peace with the Emperor, I shall leave between the 20th and 25th Fructidor (6th and 11th September), in order to rejoin you. This home of intrigue is altogether repugnant to the character of a soldier, whose sole aim is the prosperity of his country, and is not to my taste. Farewell, my General. Enjoy the delights of life. Do not poison your existence with melancholy thoughts. The eyes of the Republicans are turned towards you. They press your image to their hearts. Royalists look at it with respect and awe. My friendship or you is unchangeable. BERNADOTTE.

"P.S.—In spite of the efforts of Pichegru and Co., the National Guard is not being organised. That hope of the Clichians falls to the ground. I send you a précis of the life of Pichegru. Before my departure I shall do my best about the reinforcements to be sent to you to Italy."[a]

This letter from Bernadotte to Bonaparte, written on the 1st September, five days after his reception by the Directory, and three days before the *coup d'état*, reflects the writer's outlook at this crisis. It is the crude feverish effusion of a Gascon soldier of the Republic passing through his first political experience. He is still animated by feelings of friendship and gratitude towards his commander-in-chief, and it is curious to find him vaguely forecasting a consular regime, and the conquest of Europe by Napoleon. It is clear that he would favour a military intervention, if necessary, in order to avert a return to the old regime, from which he feared the worst for himself and for his country. But his natural caution and moderation held him back from advising or parti-

[a] *Corr. inéd. de N.* vi., 133, 134.

cipating in any civil violence. It appears that Barras desired Bernadotte's co-operation, and sounded him upon the subject. He thus describes the incident: "I had thought of associating with Augereau General Bernadotte, whom Bonaparte had sent to Paris with that object in view; but, having sounded Bernadotte several times during his repeated visits to me, I had been unable to obtain anything from him except vain protestations of a boundless devotion that would stop at nothing."[a] Accordingly, Barras determined to entrust the critical enterprise to Augereau alone.

On the night of 3rd September, 12,000 troops, under General Augereau, with forty pieces of cannon, occupied all the avenues to the Tuileries. The guard of the Legislative Councils quickly fraternised with Augereau's soldiers, and the Tuileries were seized on the 18th Fructidor (4th September) without a struggle, and without the shedding of a drop of blood. Augereau proceeded to arrest General Pichegru and many other members of the two councils. Barthélemy, one of the two dissentient directors, was also arrested. His colleague, Carnot, escaped, or was allowed to escape, in the nick of time by a back door.[b] Then followed what was the usual sequel of a revolutionary *journée*—a cruel proscription of the vanquished party. Barthélemy, Pichegru, and some fifty other members of the Legislative Councils were condemned to transportation, and were conveyed in iron cages across France to the port of embarkation. It was at first intended to send them to Madagascar, but the Government ultimately resolved that Guiana should be their place of detention.[b] Carnot, in his published *apologia*, suggested that the reason of this

[a] Barras, iii. 16; (E.) iii. 20. [b] *Carnot*, par Tissot, 264, 265.

change of destination was that the Government ascertained that "the inhabitants of Madagascar no longer devoured men."[a] It may be inferred, at all events, that the motive was not a merciful one. Such was the revolution of the 18th Fructidor. The Triumvirs, by this violent and unconstitutional act, forcibly overthrew the majority of the representatives of the people. While they secured a fresh lease of power, they provided a precedent for a series of *coups d'état*, the last of which was to accomplish their own overthrow at the hands of General Bonaparte.

The persons mainly responsible for this violation of the Constitution were Barras and Bonaparte, with Augereau as their instrument. The following correspondence between Bonaparte and Augereau makes their complicity very clear. On the evening of the fateful day, Augereau wrote to Bonaparte: "At last, my General, my mission is accomplished, and to-night the promises of the army of Italy are fulfilled."[b] On 23rd September Bonaparte replied in the following terms: "The whole army has applauded the wisdom and energy, which you have displayed on this most important occasion. . . ."[c]

Although Bernadotte had refused Barras' invitation to take part in the *coup d'état*, he endorsed it with his approval, when it had become an accomplished fact. On the following day, he wrote:—

"I should certainly have acted if the cause of the Republic had been compromised. But, as there was never for an instant any ground for fearing such a calamity, I did not think it my duty to mix up another sword in an enterprise which was already too military in its character."[d]

[a] Carnot's *Reply*, 102. [b] Bourrienne, i. 249.
[c] Bourrienne, i. 265, 266; *Corr. de N.* iii., 2254.
[d] Dry, ii. 365.

CARNOT.
The Organiser of Victory.
After the portrait by Barilly.

BARRAS.
Director of the French Republic, 1795–1799.
After the portrait by Raffet.

A victim and a machinator of the *Coup d'État* of the 18th Fructidor (September 4, 1797).

To face page 260.

On the same day, 5th September, he wrote the following letter to the chief of his staff:—

"I write in haste to inform you that a new Royal conspiracy was on the eve of breaking out, but has been forestalled by the foresight of the Directory, who were on the point of being overthrown. Pichegru and others are arrested. The grenadiers of the legislative body have fraternised with the troops.... The Republicans have triumphed. Not a drop of blood has been spilt; consequently, no tears have been shed. Guilt sheds none, but it shall be punished. Everything goes on wonderfully well. The Councils have assembled; meanwhile the Directory, in unveiling the conspiracy, has proclaimed the penalty of death against whosoever should exclaim, 'Long live the King,' or 'the Constitution of '93.' This proves the wisdom and the justice of the measures taken. All the people cry, 'Long live the Republic,' and so do I.—Your friend,[a] BERNADOTTE."

On the 10th September he wrote to Bonaparte:—

"PARIS, *24th Fructidor, Year V.*

"I wrote you very briefly on the 18th Fructidor, because I thought that the Directory, General Augereau, and your aide-de-camp Lavalette would inform you fully of the results of that day. In the meantime, the arrested deputies have left for Rochefort, whence they are to embark for the island of Madagascar. Paris is quiet. The people, in the first instance, learnt of the arrest of the deputies with indifference. A spirit of curiosity soon caused them to flock into the streets. Thereupon followed a burst of enthusiasm, and for the first time in many days the air was rent with cries of 'Long live the Republic!' in all the thoroughfares. . . . The Government has now the opportunity of reanimating the public spirit, but everybody feels that it must surround itself with honest and energetic Republicans. Unfortunately, a crowd of men without talents or usefulness already believe that the movement was made for their benefit alone. They haunt the avenues of the directorial palace, and carry on the most shocking

[a] Sarrazin, *Guerres civiles*, 403; *Phil.* ii. 118.

intrigues with the purpose of getting places. . . . The time is opportune for putting everything in order. The armies have recovered their position. *Les militaires de l'intérieur sont considérés ou du moins craints*. . . . Never was a better opportunity for consolidating the Republic. If the opportunity is not seized, we are threatened with the danger of being forced to make a new movement before the next elections. The legislative body has conferred full powers on the Directory. Some people think it would be better to adjourn the sittings of the council for a specified time, and to leave the Directory the duty of guiding the Constitution for a certain period, but there is much difference of opinion on this point. Nevertheless, the Directory and the legislative body are now united. No doubt there remains in the two Councils a party, which is not loyal to the Republic, and which will do all in its power to destroy us, as soon as the effects of the recent events have passed away. The Government knows this very well, and will, in all probability, take measures to avoid it, and to protect the patriots from a new persecution. I saw Barras this evening. I have also had a conversation with the Minister of War. They are going to send you 3000 unmounted cavalry from the army of Rhine and Moselle, with one or two regiments of chasseurs. I am doing my best to get four regiments, but I find much opposition, and I see little chance of success. I shall leave this in four days at the latest, and shall visit on my way the army of Sambre and Meuse on the Upper Rhine."[a]

It will be seen from this letter that Bernadotte was on the point of leaving Paris for Italy, but his departure was postponed from day to day, and he remained in the capital for three weeks.

Bourrienne tells us that Bonaparte was intoxicated with joy when he heard of the success of the *coup d'état* of the 18th Fructidor.[b] Nobody benefited by it more immediately and more lastingly than he did. It strengthened his hands in his negotiations with Austria, because the

[a] *Corr. inéd. de N.* vi., 147, 149. [b] Bourrienne, i. 264.

Government was no longer embarrassed by a hostile majority in the Councils. It foiled the party which, by advocating peace with Europe and a return to the old frontiers of France, threatened to block his career, and to sacrifice the fruits of his victories. It paved the way for the *coup d'état* which he was resolved to carry out sooner or later on his own behalf. It was a precedent, which he only awaited the opportunity of following. While it defeated Pichegru's Royalist plot, it only did so in order to keep the throne vacant for Bonaparte.

Nobody comes gloriously out of the *coup d'état* of the 18th Fructidor; and Bernadotte is no exception. He was an enthusiast for the maintenance of the existing regime, which was the object and purpose of its organisers. His habit of discipline and order, his respect for civil authority, and his Béarnais caution held him aloof from civil violence, and made him the advocate of moderate courses and of constitutional remedies.[a] But when civil violence had received constitutional confirmation, his scruples were quickly satisfied; he readily accepted the view that a conspiracy against the State had been forestalled; and he was not slow to rejoice in the results of the *coup d'état*, or reluctant to enjoy its fruits. Bourrienne says that Bernadotte "n'a pas joué un grand rôle dans cette affaire. Il a toujours été prudent."[a]

It is interesting to note the manner in which Talleyrand justified his participation in this violent proceeding. Writing to Bonaparte on 6th September, he covered up the affair with a characteristic euphemism: "On est sorti un instant de la Constitution, on y est retiré, j'espére pour toujours."[b] Before the end of this volume, Talleyrand will be found aiding Bonaparte to balk the hope to which expression is given in this passage.

[a] Bourrienne, i. 234. [b] *Le Ministère de Talleyrand*, 139.

CHAPTER XLV

After Fructidor—Bernadotte refuses a Command-in-Chief, and returns to Italy

September 5–October 3

"My honour, the voice of my conscience, and my desire to be useful to my country bid me refuse the offer. Do not insist on converting a good soldier into a bad chief."—*Extract from Bernadotte's letter to Barras, refusing the post of commander-in-chief in Southern departments, 27th September 1797.*

Bernadotte remained in Paris for a month after the *coup d'état*, and was the recipient of several marks of approval—both from the Government and the public. The directors, on the 9th September, sent to him, through the Minister of War, four valuable horses, two pistols of Versailles make, and a sword of honour.[a] On the same or the following day he received a deputation of veteran national volunteers, who came to express their pleasure at seeing him in Paris and their appreciation of his military achievements.[b]

During the remainder of his stay in Paris, Bernadotte was a frequent visitor at the Luxembourg Palace, where the directors resided; and in Barras' memoirs we find a cynical description of these visits. In view of the fact that Bernadotte refused the directors' offer of a command-in-chief, Barras perhaps judges him a little harshly.

"Bernadotte has daily tendered us his services, except on the day when we might have been likely to accept them. He never came near the Directorate on the 18th Fructidor, nor on the preceding or following days, but he reappears now that the triumph is assured,

[a] Dry, ii. 345. [b] *La Clef du Cabinet*, 10th September 1797.

and, from all he declares to us, it seems that we should have greatly depended on him, and that we are even greatly in the wrong for not having sent for him. We are pleased to accept his protestations of devotion, and, without seeking to fathom the bluster characterising his utterances, we consider we are giving him a proof of our confidence by offering him the command of the departments of the South."[a]

The Southern command included the 8th, 9th, 10th, and 20th military divisions. The South was in a disturbed condition, and Marseilles was the centre of serious trouble. The Directory did more than offer this command to Bernadotte. Assuming that he would accept promotion to a command-in-chief, and without consulting him, they signed his appointment on 20th September.[b] As a consequence, his post at the army of Italy was filled up,[c] and had to be subsequently restored to him; he figures in reference books, including the National Almanac for the ensuing year, as commander-in-chief of the Southern division; and several historical works represent him as having pacified the South. We find his appointment announced in a Paris journal of 26th September, and contradicted on 27th September.[d]

In a letter, dated 27th September, Bernadotte gives his reasons for refusing the appointment.

"To Citizen Barras, Member of the Executive Directory.

"Citizen Director,—You have requested me to think over the command with which the Directory desire to entrust me. I have accordingly again searched my conscience (*Je me suis de nouveau interrogé*), and have carefully considered the duties which it would involve, and the means necessary for fulfilment. However painful it may be to me to have

[a] Barras, iii. 35, 36. [b] Dry, ii. 348. [c] *Corr. de N.* iii., 2282, 2296.
[d] *La Clef du Cabinet*, 26th and 27th September 1797.

to acknowledge my inability to bear such a burden, I owe it to you to make a frank avowal, because I should be very much to blame, if I had the rash ambition to dare to accept an employment requiring profound knowledge, close study of human nature, and a character at once firm and conciliatory. My honour, the voice of my conscience (*Mon honneur, le cri de mon conscience*), and my desire to be useful to my country bid me refuse the offer. Do not insist on converting a good soldier into a bad chief. I beg you to accept and to convey the regrets, which accompany my refusal to the Directory, and I hope personally to have the honour of expressing my gratitude to them.—With compliments and respect,

"BERNADOTTE.

"P.S.—If it were necessary to subdue a faction I should consult nothing but my courage and my ardent Republicanism, but, at a time when the crisis is passed, I owe to the Government the result of a frank estimate of my capacities for such duties as are proposed to me."[a]

It has been said of Bernadotte that "il aimait s'empanacher d'un beau sentiment." There is, however, some consistency in the standards by which he claimed, in his rhetorical style, to be guided. Here we find him claiming to follow the dictates of "Mon honneur et le cri de mon conscience," to which, on receiving his commission as lieutenant, he promised his brother, in his letter of 4th March 1791, that he would always be obedient.[b]

Barras attributes Bernadotte's refusal of this command to a timidity and a caution in civil affairs, which prevented him from mixing himself up in internal disorders, and to ambitious views which soared beyond the limits of a provincial command. Barras then proceeds :—

[a] See App. Note (21C). [b] See Chapter VII., page 48 *supra*.

"So it is settled that Bernadotte is to return to Italy to resume command of his division and rejoin his brothers-in-arms, whom he says he longs for continually, and from whom he cannot remain separated without shedding tears; but, before starting for Italy, Bernadotte desires to have a few confidential conversations with me."

Barras adds, in his cynical fashion:—

"One who held high positions, and has seen ambitious men come to him, in order to prefer their requests, knows that their ordinary formula is to begin by saying that they have no ambition. Sometimes they even submit distant projects, which they seek to represent as born of a disgust for grandeur and for the whole human race. And yet this assumed disgust consists in a desire to obtain a distant command—in other words, to be the first somewhere, in consequence of the chagrin they feel at their inability to be first at home. So it was with Bernadotte, who, before leaving Paris to rejoin the army of Italy, suggests an expedition to India to us. Of course the scheme has doubtless no other object than the welfare of France, but also, of course, no one better than the author of the scheme can obtain this national benefit."[a]

The command-in-chief of the two armies, which were stationed on the Rhine, became vacant in September, owing to the sudden death of General Hoche; and General Augereau received this command as the reward of his share in the recent *coup d'état*. The following letter, written by General Kléber to the painter Guérin, who happened to be painting the portraits of Kléber and Lefèbvre, affords evidence that Bernadotte was supposed by his friends to have had the refusal of this command:—

"VENDÉMIAIRE, *An VI.*
(*Sept.* 1797).

"Bernadotte has been offered the command of the two armies on the Rhine; he had the wisdom

[a] Barras, iii. 37; (E.) iii. 48, 49.

and modesty to refuse. That burden has since been laid upon Augereau, who, not suspecting anything, has accepted it. Do not be anxious about me, my friend, I have in the Luxembourg an enemy who daily renders me the greatest service by keeping me out of all the commands, and you know, of course, that I shall not ask for any myself. That will not prevent my *cabriolet* from bringing to your house to-morrow, with gleaming swords, Lefèbvre and your devoted

"KLÉBER.

"To CITIZEN JEAN GUÉRIN, QUAI VOLTAIRE, ETC."[a]

On 27th September Bernadotte wrote to Bonaparte announcing his refusal of the Southern command, and protesting against a rumoured dispersion of his division of the army of Italy. He does not as yet believe the rumour; but we shall find that this apparently trivial act of Bonaparte's contributed, more than anything else, to the widening of the breach between the two men. It has been thought that what Bernadotte objected to was the reduction of the numbers of his command, and the consequent lessening of his own importance. But this is a superficial view. He had just refused a command-in-chief which comprised four divisions. The reason given in the letter is more likely to be the true one. Bernadotte was attached to the troops, with whom he had fought in the Netherlands, on the Rhine, and in Italy. They were "his family," and the proposal to break them up wounded the sentimental side of his Gascon nature. His letter to Bonaparte is as follows :—

"PARIS, *27th September.*

"I have been informed that there is a rumour that you intend to dissolve my division and to form a new one out of it. I cannot believe it, because you

[a] Chuquet, *Quatre généraux de la Révolution*, 212, 213.

promised me the contrary before my departure from Milan. Besides, you know, my General, that my division is my military family and I am attached to it. I have refused the command of the 8th, 9th, and 10th, and 20th military divisions. I shall be with you in eleven days, that is to say, as soon as my letter."[a]

But Bernadotte again postponed his departure, and on 1st October he took part in the funeral of General Hoche, and with Generals Augereau, Hedouville, and Tilley acted as a pall-bearer on that occasion.[b] It was about the 3rd of October that he started to rejoin his division in Italy. Before he left the capital, the question of appointing him Minister of War had been seriously mooted, and had been laid aside on account of the reputation which he had acquired for moderation in civil affairs.[c] At his farewell audience the directors gave him their parting instructions for General Bonaparte. These were to the effect that they wished him to recommence the war, to set up new governments in Northern Italy, and on no account to cede Venice to Austria.

[a] *Corr. inéd. de N.* vii., 332. [b] *Moniteur*, October 1797.
[c] Bourrienne, i. 246.

CHAPTER XLVI

Remarkable Conversation between Bonaparte and Bernadotte—The Peace of Campo Formio

October 3–17, 1797

"Thanks to the good reinforcements which you brought to us from Germany, everything points to a treaty which will be glorious to France."—*Madame Josephine Bonaparte to Bernadotte, October 1797.*

For some reason or other Bonaparte seems to have become uneasy at the continuance of Bernadotte's stay in Paris. His A.D.C., Lavalette, says that he was disturbed by a rumour that the Directory contemplated making Bernadotte Minister of War.[a] Perhaps this may account for his anxiety for the return of the Gascon general to the army of Italy. There is reason to believe that it was owing to Bonaparte's influence that the Directory offered Bernadotte the command at Marseilles. It would have been one thing to relegate Bernadotte to a provincial command in France; it would have been a very different thing to have seen him installed as Minister of War. Evidence of Bonaparte's anxiety upon this subject is to be found in a letter of the 21st October from the President of the Directory to Bonaparte, in which occur the following words: "You complain of the absence of General Bernadotte. He must have already rejoined you and have communicated to you the true intentions of the Directory more clearly than any mere despatches can do."[b] Again, on 22nd October, Barras' secretary wrote to Bonaparte:—

[a] Lavalette, 142.

[b] *Corr. inéd. de N.* iv., 246.

"You are mistaken, Citizen General, in your estimate of the Directory. Perhaps the Government commits many faults, perhaps it does not always take such a correct view of affairs as you do. But with what Republican docility has it received your observations? . . . You complain of Bernadotte! He is already with you. . . ."[a]

The writer of this note was not mistaken in supposing that Bernadotte had already reached his post; for he had arrived at Udine, the head-quarters of his division in Friuli, in the middle of October. Bonaparte had been in the vicinity at the Castle of Passariano, since the end of August, engaged in negotiations with the Austrian plenipotentiaries. On one occasion, during Bernadotte's absence, Bonaparte had gone to Udine to pay a formal visit to Count Cobenzl, the Austrian plenipotentiary. Bernadotte's staff officer in Udine had escorted Bonaparte with two regiments of cavalry and with a hundred officers in grand uniforms; and had lined all the streets with soldiers under arms. Bonaparte thanked the staff officer, who, wishing to promote good feeling between his general and Bonaparte, drew so far upon his imagination as to reply that he was merely fulfilling the intentions that General Bernadotte had expressed before his departure for Paris.

On the day that Bernadotte returned to Udine, Bonaparte came from Passariano to see him, and thanked him for the arrangements which he had thoughtfully directed to be made for his reception during his absence. As Bernadotte had made no arrangements at all, he laughed and said that it was the first that he had heard of it, but that he was very glad that his officer had divined his wishes on the subject. The remark, and the laugh which

[a] Bourrienne, i. 306, 307.

accompanied it, displeased Bonaparte, and did not help to smooth matters between them.[a]

Bonaparte then questioned Bernadotte as to the views of the Directory, and as to their bearing on his pending negotiations with the Austrians. Bernadotte informed him that the Directory's instructions were to find some excuse for recommencing the war; but, when pressed for his own advice, he expressed a strong opinion in favour of peace. He pointed out that the directors, conscious of their own weakness, considered that the best means of preserving their existence was to keep the fate of the Republic in a state of peril and uncertainty, but that the Republic would gain by a peace, one of the conditions of which would be its recognition by the Austrian Empire.

Bonaparte asked him what was thought of himself, and Bernadotte replied with frankness: "The Directory is annoyed at the want of respect which you show them; the army of Sambre and Meuse is opposed to you; the army of the Rhine believes you to be the cause of Moreau's disgrace; the Royalists know that the events of Fructidor have put a stop to their plans, and that one of the motives of that *coup d'état* was the desire to save you from the charges which they wished to bring against you. The Republicans suspect you, and have become cool even about your fame. But, the people of Paris are enthusiastic about you; the blood, that was shed on the 13th Vendémiaire, is washed away from the walls; you are to-day the idol of that populace, who would willingly have seen you carried to the scaffold on the 13th of Vendémiaire. For your own sake I advise you to make peace. If you have reverses, you cannot count on protection or help in any

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 119, 120.

quarter, and nearly all parties would rejoice if you met with defeat."[a] Bernadotte further expressed the opinion, that war could not be renewed advantageously in the present disorganised state of the country, unless the Directory were invested with a dictatorship; but he pointed out that, in that case, Bonaparte's position would be jeopardised. Whether victorious or defeated, he would become an object of suspicion in the eyes of a Government invested with dictatorial powers.

Bonaparte invited Bernadotte to dinner at Passariano, requesting him to come early.[b] Bernadotte took the word "early" too literally, and, instead of taking care to arrive shortly before the five o'clock dinner hour, presented himself, with his staff officer, General Sarrazin, at three o'clock in the afternoon. Duroc, the aide-de-camp on duty, asked him to wait, as Bonaparte was engaged writing his letters for the post. Bernadotte replied: "Tell the commander-in-chief that it does not suit General Bernadotte to wait in the anteroom. Even the Directory in Paris never subjected him to such a mortification." Before Duroc had time to reply to this gasconade, Bonaparte made his appearance, and proposed a walk in the garden. He explained that, as soon as he had heard Bernadotte's voice, he had come forward to assure him that he had no intention of standing upon ceremony with a general, whom he considered to be the right hand of his army. General Sarrazin adds that, while Bonaparte received Bernadotte "avec une douceur angélique," he bit his lip with anger and annoyance, and took an ample revenge in the course of the conversation which ensued.[a]

Bernadotte replied that he came from a country

[a] Lafosse, i. 144, 145; Sarrans, 20.

[b] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 121; ib. *Guerre de la Restauration*, Préface, vii.

where men's confidence could only be gained by gentle means, and that Bonaparte had always treated him with such courtesy, that he could not help expressing surprise when Duroc told him to wait. Bonaparte and Bernadotte then sallied forth for a preprandial stroll in the garden of Passariano, accompanied by General Sarrazin, who has recorded the conversation, or rather the debate, to which he was a listener.[a]

In answer to a question from Bonaparte, Bernadotte expressed admiration for Hoche, and spoke of the opinion entertained of him in Paris, where he was regarded as being in war what Mirabeau had been in politics. He took the opportunity of contrasting the honour paid to Hoche's memory, with the comparative oblivion to which his own brave comrade Marceau had been relegated. Bonaparte, on the other hand, disparaged Hoche as a man lacking judgment and distinction; and Marceau, as having been a mere vanguard leader, without any larger experience.

The conversation then turned on Augereau, who had just been appointed commander-in-chief of the army of Sambre and Meuse. Bernadotte criticised the appointment, referring to Augereau's reputation for roughness and illiteracy, and adding that Kléber or Beurnonville ought, in his opinion, to have been selected for that command instead of Augereau. Bonaparte, who, as we know from other sources, strongly disapproved of Augereau's appointment,[b] chose, upon this occasion, to take Augereau's part. He said that Augereau was not an "academician, a coxcomb, or a monk," but that such characters were little suited for a field of battle or a bivouac; and he went on to depreciate Kléber for insubordination to the civil government,

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 121–131, 153–174.

[b] *Bonaparte et Hoche*, 222; Lavalette, 142, 143.

and Beurnonville as a carpet knight. Of the latter he said, " If I govern France, I think I shall employ him as an ambassador. He has the style and manner necessary for a drawing-room or a great dinner-party."

Sarrazin describes Bonaparte as taking a malignant pleasure in tantalising Bernadotte. He discussed the merits of other generals, but studiously avoided any reference or compliment to Bernadotte himself. Of Masséna he said that he was a good general of a vanguard, but required to be kept under direction; of Joubert, that he had all the requisite talents for a command-in-chief; of Serrurier, that he was a capable commander of a reserve; of the Irishman, Kilmaine, that he was an excellent leader of heavy cavalry.

The conversation then turned to a comparison between the wars on the Rhine and in Italy, and here, again, the two generals took opposite sides—Bernadotte declaring that the victories in Italy had been unduly magnified, and Bonaparte attributing those on the Rhine to the mistakes of the Austrians.

Bonaparte then proceeded to enumerate the qualities which ought to be united in a successful commander-in-chief, and to discuss the relative merits and achievements of Alexander, Cæsar, Hannibal, and all the greatest captains of all ages. Every now and then he was malicious enough to ask Bernadotte questions, which he well knew the untutored Gascon was unable to answer. He enlarged upon the formation of the Grecian phalanx, and upon the organisation of the Roman legion. Bernadotte, although an excellent practical soldier, was unacquainted with these subjects, and is described by the eye-witness as becoming greatly agitated, and perspiring copiously.

Both generals must have been relieved at the sound of that " tocsin of the soul," the dinner-bell. At

dinner one of the guests was General Marfeldt, the Austrian plenipotentiary, and the conversation again turned upon military science. General Marfeldt, who had contracted a friendship with Bernadotte since their meeting at Leoben, and saw that his friend was out of his depth, turned the conversation to infantry manœuvres. This gave Bernadotte his chance, and Bonaparte himself had to yield to him, when he got upon his own familiar ground.[a]

It may be inferred that this dinner-party was not an unqualified success. After dinner, Bernadotte remarked to his staff officer that Bonaparte must have extraordinary aptitude for learning, to be so well-informed at his age ; and that, if he (Bernadotte) were not so old, he would not hesitate to give himself up to study. The staff officer replied that there was always time enough to learn, that Bernadotte was only thirty-five years of age, and that he would learn the theory of war all the more easily from his thorough knowledge of its practical side.

A new era in Bernadotte's life commenced from this moment. The man, who the day before would have yawned with ennui if by chance he had taken up a book, now began to pass days and nights in mastering all the best works on military and political history and science.[a] In his leisure moments he would send for some of his officers, and would discuss with them the books which he was reading. We shall find, in his subsequent letters and pronouncements, evidence of these studies. Two years afterwards, his companion of the dinner-party at Passariano met him again, and was thunderstruck to hear him discoursing on history with Garat, on politics with Talleyrand, and on war with the ablest scientific experts ; and

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 174, 175.

Bernadotte candidly admitted to him that all his studies, and all the knowledge, that he had acquired from them, were traceable to that evening in October 1797, when he went to General Bonaparte too early for dinner, and made the discovery of the depth of his own ignorance.

It was a mark of Napoleon's personality, that he had a singular power of stimulating his subordinates to improve themselves. A case in point was Marshal Lannes, of whom Napoleon truly said, "When I found him he was a pigmy, when I lost him he was a giant."[a]

At the Castle of Passariano, Bernadotte made the acquaintance of Madame Bonaparte, under whose first husband, General Beauharnais, he had served on the Rhine in 1793. Josephine seized an opportunity of heartily concurring with Bernadotte's wishes for the conclusion of peace. She added, in her gracious, caressing way, "Thanks to the good reinforcements which you brought to us from Germany, everything points to a treaty which will be glorious for France."[b]

A few days after Bernadotte's return to the army, Bonaparte brought the negotiations for peace to a point; and the Treaty of Campo Formio was concluded between Austria and the French Republic. Some writers have drawn the natural inference that Bonaparte, in precipitating the peace arrangements, was influenced by the information and advice which he had just received from Bernadotte. But Bonaparte's motives were probably so mixed as to defy analysis. Two of his household, who saw him every day, have recorded their opinions upon the subject. These were his secretary Bourrienne, and his aide-de-camp, Lavalette.

[a] Las Cases, ii. 43. [b] Lafosse, 146, 147.

Bourrienne says that it was the early appearance of winter that precipitated the signing of the treaty. He relates that on the 13th October, at daybreak, after a superb summer evening, he saw the mountains covered with snow. He awakened Bonaparte, who leaped from his bed, ran to the window, and exclaimed: "What, snow before the middle of October! What a country is this! Well, we must make peace."[a]

Lavalette says that the prospect of seeing Bernadotte Minister of War contributed to fix Bonaparte's plans. He writes: "Bernadotte had returned from Paris. The Directory had loaded him with praise; the Ministry of the War had been promised him, and when the general-in-chief learned of the nomination of General Augereau to the command of the army on the Rhine, he felt that, with so weak a commander on the Rhine and so ambitious a Minister at Paris, it would be impossible for him to obtain glorious results, and he consequently resolved to make peace."[b]

[a] Bourrienne, i. 309. [b] Lavalette, 142, 143.

CHAPTER XLVII

THE FIRST SERIOUS RIFT WITH BONAPARTE

OCTOBER–NOVEMBER 1797

"Your Bernadotte is a very weak person. I cannot do better than compare him to an old corporal, who complains lustily when a man is taken from his file. When you see him again, tell him my only answer is that I never dined out of the wooden bowl."—*Bonaparte's reply to Bernadotte's protest against the breaking-up of his division, November 1797.*

BERNADOTTE, upon his return to Udine, received a cordial welcome from the officers and troops of his division. In his absence his place had been taken by General Victor (afterwards Marshal of the Empire and Duke of Belluno). Victor had sometimes expressed to those about him the hope that, in the rumoured event of Bernadotte's promotion to a command-in-chief, he might himself succeed him. These remarks were received in dead silence, and it was observed by those, who were present, that no higher tribute could have been paid to Bernadotte than the attachment to him, which was exhibited by his subordinates, when he was far away and was not expected to return. Not a man was found to pay a compliment at his expense to his probable successor, or to disguise his regret at the prospect of losing their general.[a]

A funeral ceremony, in memory of General Hoche, was, by order of the Directory, celebrated at home and abroad by all the armies of the Republic, in October 1797.[b] Thiébault, in his memoirs, tells us that, in all, save one, of the divisions of the army of Italy this memorial ceremony was managed with the worst possible grace. He was a captain in General Masséna's

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 118. [b] *Corr. de N.* iii., 2301.

division, and was ordered to deliver an address, his only instructions being, "Be short." Nobody listened, or seemed to know or care what was going on. In his opinion, this exhibition of indifference was due to jealousy of the reputation of Hoche, who was regarded as having been a rival of Bonaparte. On this occasion Bernadotte and his division again singled themselves out from the rest of the army by a display of good manners and good feeling; and it was noticed by others besides Thiébault that, so far as the army of Italy was concerned, Bernadotte's division was the only one to pay fitting respect to Hoche's memory.[a]

Soon after this funeral fête, an event occurred, which caused the first open breach between Bonaparte and Bernadotte. On the 9th of November Bonaparte issued from Milan an order reorganising his army, detaching a number of generals for service in the army of England, and at the same time leaving sufficient troops for the occupation of Italy. One of these orders ran as follows :—

"HEAD-QUARTERS, MILAN,
9th November.

"TO THE CHIEF OF THE STAFF.

"You will give orders to Generals Masséna, Bernadotte, Brune, Joubert, Victor, etc., to hold themselves in readiness to join the army of England."[b]

The following order had the effect of breaking up Bernadotte's division :—

"General Bernadotte will start from Udine on the 1st Brumaire (*i.e.* 21st November) with the 61st Regiment, the 30th Regiment, and the 88th Regiment, to take up his position at Treviso. He will leave his artillery, the 15th Regiment of Light Infantry, the 55th Regiment of the Line, and the 16th and 19th Chasseurs, which will form part of the division of General Baraguay d'Hilliers."[b]

[a] Thiébault (E.), i. 329, 330. [b] *Corr. de N.*, 2332, 2334.

It has been mentioned, in a previous chapter,[a] that Bernadotte wrote from Paris in September, calling attention to a rumour that his division, which he then referred to as his "military family," was to be broken up, protesting against that course, and reminding Bonaparte of his promise to the contrary. It appears that the breaking-up of his division annoyed Bernadotte to an almost incredible degree. There does not seem to be any ground for inferring that, in this re-shuffling of troops and commands, Bernadotte was specially aimed at. The divisions of other generals were broken up in a similar way; and no protest came from them.

In forming a judgment upon this incident, it should be remembered that Bernadotte and his division had served together since June 1794, in both Northern and Southern Europe; under Jourdan and under Bonaparte; in the army of Sambre and Meuse, and in the army of Italy. They had been drawn more closely together by their quarrels with the soldiers of Masséna and of Augereau. Their discipline, independence, smartness, and *esprit de corps* had provoked comparisons and contrasts, which had served to intensify their pride in themselves and in their commander. It should also be remembered that Bernadotte had few other ties. For seventeen years he had led a wandering life in camps, garrisons, and battle-fields. All the enthusiasm and sympathy, which were part of his southern nature, were centred in the officers and men of his division. They were, in truth, his family.

Bonaparte could not understand such sentiments. To him armies, divisions, regiments, and soldiers were so many counters in a great game of war, policy, and ambition. In conversation with one of Berna-

[a] Chapter XLV., pages 268, 269 *supra*.

dotte's officers, he ridiculed that general's sensitiveness about his corps, treating it as the idiosyncrasy of an ex-ranker. He said: "Your Bernadotte is a very weak person. I cannot do better than compare him to an old corporal, who complains lustily when a man is taken from his file. When you see him again, tell him my only answer is that I never dined out of the wooden bowl."[a] This was, of course, a slang allusion to Bernadotte's long service "in the ranks." The Executive Directory were equally incapable of appreciating Bernadotte's feelings, and regarded his complaints as the grumblings of a "peevish child." However, if he was a peevish child, he was sufficiently important to be worth humouring.

The manner of Bernadotte's leave-taking exemplified his cordial relations both with his troops and with the people of Friuli. In the memoirs of Lahure, who was colonel of the 13th, one of the regiments which was now being taken from Bernadotte's command, we read the farewell letters written by Bernadotte to the colonel and to the men :—

"HEAD-QUARTERS, UDINE,
17th November 1797.

"I send you, my dear Lahure, a letter for the troops forming your regiment. I beg that you will convey it to them, by putting it in the orders of your corps.

"In leaving you, my dear Lahure, accept the assurance of my sincere friendship, and believe that I shall do all in my power to have you reappointed to my division. If I cannot succeed, I shall make a strong appeal on your behalf to have you sent to the north of France, which I know is the place to which you are bound by your affections and associations.

"Farewell, my dear Lahure. I embrace you with all my heart. BERNADOTTE."[b]

[a] Sarrazin, *Confession of Bonaparte*, App. 256. [b] Lahure, 129.

"*17th November* 1797.

"THE GENERAL OF DIVISION, BERNADOTTE, TO THE TROOPS COMPOSING THE 13TH REGIMENT.

"I leave you with regret. I depart to join the army of England, and am deprived of the advantage of taking you with me. I leave you under the orders of General Baraguay d'Hilliers, a wise and prudent officer.

"Continue to maintain your reputation by that discipline, which I assure you was not too exacting. Be generous and good. Make the burdens of the inhabitants as light as possible. Always preserve the happy recollection of your conquests on the Rhine and of your triumphs in Italy. Lift your souls to lofty ideals. Remember that most of your generals have risen from your ranks. Keep unsullied the laurels which crown your heads. You can preserve your glory; it would be difficult to increase it.

"I have not lost the hope of having you with me again. The day, when you are once more under my command, will be one of the brightest and happiest of my life. BERNADOTTE."[a]

The following address, which he received from the president, on behalf of the States, of Friuli, affords evidence of his success in the administration of that province. Throughout his career, he never failed to win the goodwill of the many countries and cities, the administration of which fell to him from time to time:—

"The new sphere of glory which has been offered to you cannot console us for the prospect of losing you. May the genius of France accompany and guard you. We shall hear of your achievements with the pride, with which we have been inspired by the honour of having been confided to your Rule. It is among us and in our territory that, by your beneficent care for our prosperity, you have acquired a reputation, which is all the more precious, because it belongs to you alone. Your officers and soldiers cannot aspire to share it, as they can to share your military glory. The recollection of your conduct will remain for ever graven upon our hearts."[b]

[a] Lahure, 129. [b] Lafosse, 154, 155.

CHAPTER XLVIII

BERNADOTTE, AFTER ACCEPTING TWO COMMANDS-IN-CHIEF, BECOMES AMBASSADOR TO AUSTRIA

NOVEMBER 1797–JANUARY 1798

"Although I have grounds for complaint against you, I shall part from you without ceasing to have for your talents my greatest esteem."—*Bernadotte to Bonaparte, November 1797.*

"No one more appreciates than I do the purity of your principles, the loyalty of your character, and the military talents, which you have developed while we have served together. You will do me an injustice, if you doubt it for a moment."—*Bonaparte to Bernadotte, December 1797.*

IN November 1797, Bernadotte moved to Treviso, where his manœuvres attained such a reputation as to attract a number of military visitors, including Mack, the well-known Austrian general, who became his guest and friend. Mack, who was noted for his prodigious memory of the dates and events of the Belgian and German campaigns, delighted in fighting past battles over again, and in paying compliments to his host's prowess.[a]

These occupations and distractions failed to reconcile Bernadotte to the break-up of his division. His correspondence at this date (the end of November 1797) shows that he was in a restless and discontented mood. On 28th November he wrote to the Directory asking for a command in the Isle of France (*i.e.* Mauritius) or the Island of Reunion, or in India, or in the Ionian Islands. Failing one of these appointments, he asked for an inspectorship of infantry, or for employment in the army of Portugal, or for his retirement.[b]

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 177, 178.

[b] Lafosse, 149, where this letter is misdated.

He concluded the letter with protestations of devotion to the Directory and to the Republic. By the same post, 28th November, he wrote to Bonaparte :—

"I send you, General, a copy of a request which I have made to the Directory, and of the letter which I have written to the president. If my retirement is granted me, I beg you will employ in the army of England the citizens Villate and Maurin, my aides-de-camp. They are good subjects. They will serve the Republic with the same zeal and ardour which have always characterised the troops from the Rhine. They will, like me, bow to superior talents, but never to mere audacity. Although I have grounds for complaint against you, I shall part from you without ceasing to have for your talents my greatest esteem."[a]

This letter has been described as an "insolent" one.[b] It certainly breathes a spirit of independence, and commends his aides-de-camp in a way, which was more likely to do them harm than good with Bonaparte.

Barras, in his memoirs, tells us that the Directory looked upon Bernadotte's offer of retirement as an outburst of ill-temper or an indirect request for other employment. He describes Bernadotte as the "pupil of Kléber,"[c] and as having learnt from his master the lessons of military insubordination. He adds, however, that the Government, having a high opinion of Bernadotte, wrote to him (18th December) that they had intended that he should command one of the divisions of the army of England, but that, if he should prefer the command of the Ionian Isles, they would entrust him with it.[c] On the same day Bonaparte wrote to him from Paris :—

"I have received, Citizen General, your last letter. The Executive Directory assure me that

[a] Lafosse, 149, 150. [b] Dry, ii. 251.
[c] Barras, iii. 92, 149; (E.) iii. 117, 190.

they will be eager to seize every opportunity of doing what will be pleasing to you.

"They have decided to give you the choice of the command of the Ionian Islands, or of a division of the army of England, which will be augmented by the addition of your old troops of the army of Sambre and Meuse, or even of a territorial division, for example the 17th (*i.e.* the division of which Paris is the centre).

"No one more appreciates than I do the purity of your principles, the loyalty of your character, and the military talents, which you have developed while we have served together. You will do me an injustice, if you doubt it for a moment.

"In all circumstances I shall count on your esteem and friendship. I salute you.

"BONAPARTE."[a]

These soft words seem to have mollified Bernadotte, who accepted, by letter of 31st December,[b] the command of the Ionian Islands; and responded to Bonaparte's cordiality by sending him a report upon the military organisation of those islands.

Within a week of Bernadotte's acceptance of the command of the Ionian Islands, the directors suddenly changed their minds, and resolved to appoint him to be commander-in-chief of the army of Italy; and on the 6th of January they informed Bonaparte of their decision. Their object seems to have been to put forward Bernadotte as a counterpoise to Bonaparte's growing predominance. At all events, Bonaparte saw some danger or injury to himself in such an appointment, and exerted all his influence to prevent it. In the meantime, he wrote on 6th January the following letter to Bernadotte:—

"I thank you, Citizen General, for the notes which you sent me on the French establishments in the Ionian Sea. You are not wasting your time.

[a] *Corr. de N.* iii., 2390. [b] Dry, ii. 354.

You are devoting to the collection of useful information the hours which peace enables you to snatch from the field of battle.

"I should have greatly wished to have you with me in England; but it appears that the Government thinks that it is necessary for you to remain where you are, in order to command the army of Italy. That post is of such enormous importance that I could not with a good grace oppose their wish. Believe me that in all circumstances I shall give you proof of the esteem with which you have inspired me. I salute you."[a]

While Bonaparte was writing these honeyed words, he was leaving no stone unturned to have Bernadotte's new appointment cancelled. In the first instance, he tried to depreciate Bernadotte by representing him to the Directory as an ordinary soldier with limited intellectual capacities, who could be nothing more than a general of division, and lacked the necessary qualifications for a command-in-chief, and by urging that the command in Italy should be given to a man more trained to understand and manage the Italians. He recommended Berthier, or, failing him, Brune, or anyone rather than Bernadotte.[b]

While Bonaparte was engaged in these active intrigues, an event happened which strengthened his hands. The news reached Paris of serious disturbances at Rome. An *émeute* had occurred on 28th December, outside the palace of the French ambassador, who happened to be Joseph Bonaparte, the brother of the general. In the course of the disturbance General Duphot, who was the fiancé of the ambassador's sister-in-law, Desirée Clary, was killed; and the necessity at once arose for strong measures against Rome.

The Roman *émeute* and the death of Duphot had

[a] *Corr. de N.* iii., 2400. [b] Barras, iii. 150; (E.) iii. 191.

important consequences for Bernadotte. They led to his becoming an ambassador instead of a commander-in-chief. They also affected the whole current of his future life, for within a twelvemonth he was married to the young lady to whom Duphot had been affianced.

Bonaparte, whose close relationship with the ambassador at Rome increased his influence at this crisis, now altered his tactics with reference to Bernadotte's appointment. Having failed to oust him by disparagement, he lavished praises upon his good qualities. He pointed out that Bernadotte was amiable, full of seductive power, shrewd, and crafty, and that diplomacy claimed him for its own. He said that, in view of the Roman emergency, it would be absolutely necessary to send to Vienna an ambassador with a great military reputation, and he suggested Bernadotte. He pointed out what a triumph it would be for the Directory to impose upon the haughty aristocratic Austrian Government a plebeian general as the ambassador of the French Republic; and he finally succeeded, by these persistent intrigues, in having the command of the army of Italy taken away from Bernadotte, and in having him appointed to the Viennese Embassy. Barras, who was one of the directors at this time, records these particulars in his memoirs, and tells us that he recollects them as well as the day they happened.[a]

When Bernadotte was on his way to Milan, in January 1798, to take up the command of the army of Italy, he received the news of his appointment as ambassador to Vienna. The change was most distasteful to him. He regarded it as a disgrace. It was pointed out to him by Berthier, who was at Milan,

[a] Barras, iii. 150, 151; (E.) iii. 192. *Vers Brumaire*, 91, 92.

that the situation was urgent, and that his presence at Vienna was an immediate and important public duty Bernadotte appears to have yielded to these considerations with reluctance and misgiving; and the incident did not improve his relations with Berthier.[a]

The Viennese ambassadorship had been, in old France, the blue riband of the diplomatic service. After nearly a decade's desuetude it was being revived in the person of Bernadotte, ex-ranker of the Royal-la-Marine Regiment, ex-general of the army of the Revolution. How he played his part upon this new stage will be related in the following chapters of this book.

[a] Pingaud, 20.

PART VII[a]

A GASCON AMBASSADOR

JANUARY–MAY 1798

"C'était la révolution, en la personne de Bernadotte, qui faisait son entrée a Vienne. C'était une bravade" . . .—FREDERIC MASSON, *Les Diplomates de la Révolution*, 153.

"Nullement ému, le chapeau de feutre noir crânement enfoncé sur la tête, la main sur la garde de son sabre, avec l'allure décidée que l'on prête aux cadets de Gascogne, le Général Bernadotte, répresentant la Révolution triomphante, monte glorieusement les marches de l'antique demeure des empereurs."—A. DRY, *Soldats Ambassadeurs sous le Directoire*, ii. 376.

[a] This is the only part of Bernadotte's early career that has hitherto received any serious attention. There have been two admirable studies of the episode of Bernadotte's Viennese Embassy—in Frédéric Masson's *Les Diplomates de la Révolution*, pp. 147–248, and in A. Dry's *Soldats Ambassadeurs sous le Directoire*, ii. pp. 359–468. In addition to these two works, the author has made use of *Les Mémoires Tirés des Papiers d'un Homme d'État*, v. 492 et seq.; the newspapers of the day, e.g. *Le Moniteur*, *La Gazette de France*, and *La Clef du Cabinet*; the memoirs of Barras; *Vers Brumaire*, par Albert Espitalier; and M. Sorel's *L'Europe et la Révolution française*.

PART VII

A GASCON AMBASSADOR

JANUARY–MAY 1798

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CHAPTER XLIX

BERNADOTTE, AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC AT THE COTRT OF VIENNA—HIS ENTOURAGE—HIS RECEPTION

JANUARY–FEBRUARY. 1798

"Propre à entrer dans toutes les carrières."—*The Directory's description of Bernadotte when appointing him ambassador.*

"The Republic is like the sun: whoever cannot see it is blind." *The international point of view of the French Republic.*

"I have said to myself that, in a young Republic, the men, who cherish the love of serving her, should approach high office as they would approach death—neither desiring it nor fearing it." —*Bernadotte to Talleyrand, 28th January* 1798.

FOR the French Republic to send an ambassador to Vienna was a startling and incongruous event. Five years had hardly gone by, since Marie Antoinette, Archduchess of Austria, had perished under the guillotine, at the behest of the political party which was now ascendant in France. The interval had been employed by Austria and France in a ceaseless succession of sanguinary campaigns, during which all diplomatic relations between the two countries had been suspended. The Emperor and the Austrian Government, not satisfied with maintaining war against the Republic, had omitted no opportunity of exhibiting their sympathy with the fallen French Monarchy. Many distinguished French aristocrats and *émigrés*, who were regarded by the Republican Government as outlaws and fugitives from justice, were received in Vienna with every mark of distinction; and their *ci-devant* rank, orders, and decorations were recognised and respected at the Austrian Court, as if the exiled "Pretender" was really King of France.

Public opinion and popular feeling ran strongly in the same direction. In no capital in Europe was there less sympathy with the ideas, and more hatred of the horrors, of the French Revolution. The city had contributed thousands of volunteers, and millions of money, for the defence of the frontiers of the Empire from the French invaders.

Nothing was done, upon this occasion, to conciliate Austrian opinion, or to ease the difficulties which awaited the new ambassador. The Directory did not consult the Austrian Government as to the sending, or as to the selection, of their representative, or even make the usual request for his passports. They carried out the appointment in a spirit of bravado, and with a total disregard for the ordinary rules of international courtesy. This was in accordance with the attitude of *audace* which France had taken up towards the old monarchies of Europe, treating with disdain the question of foreign recognition, and forcing herself upon the notice of other countries with the defiant declaration that the Republic was "like the sun, and that whoever could not see her was blind."[a] It was in this insolent spirit that the Directory hurled Bernadotte into the *corps diplomatique* of the most aristocratic and anti-Republican Court in Europe.

Bernadotte was not responsible for the manner, or rather the unmannerliness, of his appointment. He was unversed in diplomatic usage; and his correspondence with the Directory, and with Talleyrand, the Foreign Minister, proves that he was conscious of the difficulty of his new post, and of his own shortcomings in point of knowledge and experience. To the Directory he wrote, in accepting the appointment: "The first quality of a soldier, which is obedience,

[a] Masson, 150–154.

forbids me to hesitate; but I fear that I shall meet greater difficulties in diplomacy than any which I have had to overcome in my military career."[a]

To Talleyrand, the Foreign Minister, he addressed several letters, in which he sought counsel and advice from the *rusé* ex-Bishop of Autun. The following epistle, dated the 28th January, will serve as an example of his letters to Talleyrand :—

"In accepting the important mission which the Government has just confided to me, I have consulted my capacity less than my desire to be useful to the Republic. The latter motive has elevated my soul and exalted my imagination. I have said to myself that, in a young Republic, the men, who cherish the love of serving her, should approach high office as they would approach death—neither desiring it nor fearing it. I confess, and I do so without a blush, that, although the events of my life, which have so rapidly succeeded each other, have been such as to fortify the courage of my soul, that courage, which has served me in my military career, would now have abandoned me, and I should, in spite of my unalterable wish to sacrifice my tranquillity on the altar of my country, have shrunk from so delicate a task, if the hope of being aided by your counsel had not set my mind at ease. I place boundless reliance upon your willingness to advise me, because I believe that you have contributed to my appointment."[a]

This was the first occasion upon which Bernadotte was brought into relations with Talleyrand; and it did not lead to any sympathy or intimacy between them. Bernadotte's Gascon exuberance was not calculated to harmonise with Talleyrand's intolerance of zeal and enthusiasm; and his high-flown letters may well have puzzled and amused the phlegmatic and passionless Minister for Foreign Affairs. Nobody knew better than Talleyrand what a hornet's nest of social and diplomatic difficulties was awaiting the

[a] Masson, 161, 162; Dry, ii. 361.

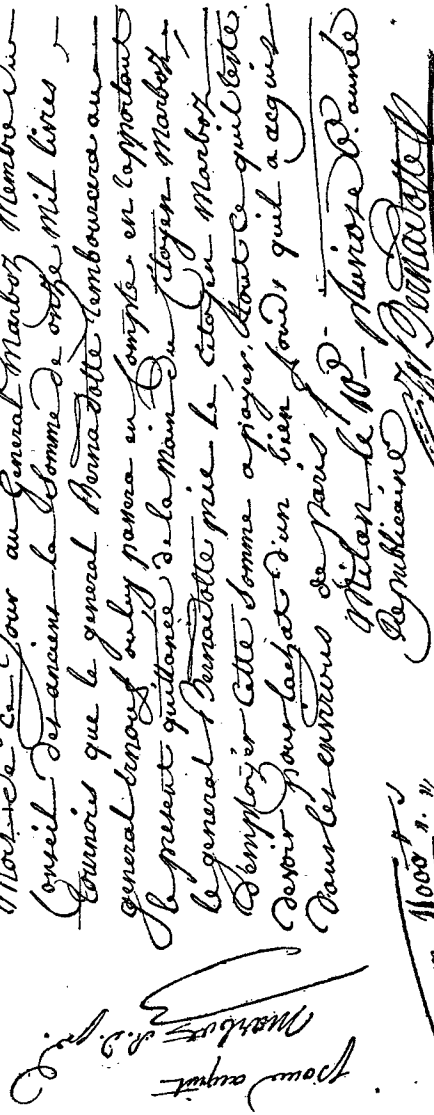
representative of Republican France in the conservative atmosphere of Vienna.

The Government did all in their power to reconcile Bernadotte to his new position. In announcing his appointment, they paid a high tribute to his military services, and described him as one who had shown himself "propre à entrer dans toutes les carrières." They fixed his salary at 140,000 francs, £5600 of our money, with ample allowances for his journey and equipment. Bernadotte's private fortune at this period consisted of about 50,000 francs (£2000), mainly derived from his share of the booty from the mines of Idria.[a]

A document of this period is in the writer's possession, which is not without some personal interest on account of its date and of the names which it contains. It is a bill of exchange, dated Milan, 10 Pluviôse, 6 année (29th January 1798), drawn by Bernadotte upon General Ernouf, who was then director at the War Office, in favour of General Marbot, whose name is spelt "Marboz." The bill is for 11,000 "livres Tournois" (£440), and Marbot is asked to apply it in discharging the balance of the purchase money of some landed property (*bien fonds*), which Bernadotte had acquired in the neighbourhood of Paris. It is endorsed by Marbot. This was, of course, the elder Marbot, father of the author of the memoirs. Ernouf and Marbot were personal friends of Bernadotte; and we shall find that Marbot was closely identified with Bernadotte in the political events of 1799. A facsimile of this document is reproduced upon the opposite page. This bill was drawn on the eve, if not on the day, of his departure from Milan for Vienna, and being addressed to General Ernouf, director of the

[a] Barras, iii. 148; (E.) iii. 188.

War Office, probably represents the investment of pay coming to him as general of division.



A facsimile of a bill of exchange, dated 10th Pluviôse, An. 6 (29th January 1798), for 11,000 *livres Tournoises* (£440), payable at two months, drawn by General Bernadotte upon General Ernouf in favour of General Marbot (the elder), to be invested in the purchase of real estate in the environs of Paris. From the original in the author's possession.

The question of the new ambassador's suite

became a burning one between the Government and Bernadotte, who was by no means prepared to merge the soldier in the diplomat. He wished for a large and distinguished military staff, and asked for Generals Mireur and Sarrazin. But the Government drew the line at general officers, and refused to give them leave. He then included in his suite his A.D.C.'s, Captain Maurin and Captain Villate, as well as two officers of his division, Captains Gérard and Toussaint. These military attachés of Bernadotte made a distinguished group. Gérard afterwards became a marshal of France under Louis-Philippe, Villate became a general and was created Count of Outremont, Maurin and Toussaint became generals and barons of the Empire.

Talleyrand raised objections to the presence in the ambassador's retinue of these military attachés, and obtained an order from the Directory excluding them. Bernadotte protested in characteristic Gascon fashion. He appealed to the Government in a letter of 24th February (6th Ventose), "not to deprive me of the pleasure of the society of some comrades-in-arms, with whom I may converse about those glorious epochs, which have shed such lustre and éclat upon the people and the Government of France."[a]

The ambassador, on the same day, wrote the following letter to the Director Barras :—

"VIENNA, *the 6th Ventose, Year 6 of the French Republic.*
Liberty. Equality.

"THE AMBASSADOR OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC AT THE COURT OF VIENNA, TO THE CITIZEN BARRAS.

"CITIZEN DIRECTOR,—In asking the Executive Directory the favour of keeping with me, on active

[a] Masson, 163, 164; Dry, ii. 364, 365.

service, but without diplomatic title, my two aides-de-camp and Citizen Gérard, captain of the 30th Regiment of infantry, I do not disguise from you that I indulge in the hope, not to say the certitude, that your good offices will support my application to the Government. These officers have served with me for a long time. . . . I regard their presence at Vienna as useful. I shall not speak to you of the friendship which binds me to them; and I shall only observe that their removal from the Embassy would be very disagreeable to me.—Greeting and respect.

"J. B. BERNADOTTE."[a]

He also wrote to General Ernouf, declaring that he would consider himself disgraced, if deprived of his military companions. Talleyrand had to yield, and to content himself with adding to Bernadotte's military household two young civilian secretaries, Villet-Fréville and Gaudin, the eldest of whom was not twenty-five.

There was also attached to the Embassy a Polish emigrant named Malechuski, an enthusiast upon one of the most delicate problems of Austrian foreign policy.[b]

Thus the new ambassador entered upon his diplomatic novitiate, with a staff consisting of four young *sabreurs*, two youthful secretaries, and a Polish propagandist. His ship was about to navigate troubled waters, better equipped with swords and with sails than with ballast or steering-gear.

Bernadotte's personality was the one element which offered any hope for the success of his mission. His reputation stood high in Austria both as a soldier and as an administrator. In one respect he was, of all the generals of the Republic, after Bonaparte, the most notable in Austrian eyes. Generals of higher reputation had invaded the territory of the Empire in recent years from Germany and Italy respectively.

[a] App. Note (24 D). [b] Masson, 164; Dry, ii. 365, 366.

But Bernadotte was the only general of distinction who had fought against Austria in both theatres of war, and had led his troops towards the gates of Vienna both from the north and from the south.

Great was the surprise of Count Cobentzel, the Austrian plenipotentiary at Rastadt, when, on 21st January, he received a letter from Bonaparte, informing him that the Directory had appointed General Bernadotte to be ambassador of the French Republic at Vienna. Cobentzel despatched a courier to the Austrian Foreign Minister with the news. He described Bernadotte, whom he had known personally in Italy, as "a parvenu who had risen from the ranks," but did him the justice to say that those who had been brought into relations with him, had found him "convenable et décent." He added, with a touch characteristic of the Austrian aristocrat of that day, "Malgré cela il était, de ceux hommes dont le meilleur ne vaut rien."[a]

The Austrian Foreign Minister at once instructed Cobentzel to write protesting against the appointment, which Cobentzel did in a despatch dated 10th February. In this despatch he stated that the Emperor, in view of "la réputation des qualités estimables du Général Bernadotte," had learnt with much satisfaction of his nomination to Vienna, but he represented that the appointment of an ambassador at this moment was inopportune, and that it was contrary to all precedent to nominate an ambassador without a previous exchange of communications. The protest, however, came too late. Before this despatch left Rastadt, Bernadotte had suddenly and unexpectedly arrived at the Austrian capital. "It was the Revolution," writes Frederic Masson, "which, in the person of Bernadotte, made its entry into Vienna."[b]

[a] Masson, 151. [b] *Ib.* 152, 153.

CHAPTER L

THE VIENNESE EMBASSY

FEBRUARY 8–APRIL 13, 1798

"It will be my principal object to convince your Majesty that the Directory of the French Republic is sincerely attached to its friends, and that it gives unqualified support and protection to its allies."—*Extract from Ambassador Bernadotte's address, on the occasion of his presentation to the Emperor, March* 1798.

"What matters the mad fury of that tyrant of the north? The French Republic defies and despises his threats. The time will soon come when that tiger in human shape will himself be attacked in the heart of his dominions."—*Ambassador Bernadotte's gasconade against the Czar of Russia, March* 1798.

BERNADOTTE travelled from Milan to Vienna by very much the same route as he had pursued in the Italian campaign of the preceding year. When he reached the Austrian frontier on 5th February, and was asked for his passports, he replied that he would regard it as an act of war, if he was not allowed to continue his journey; and the frontier officer did not dare to stop him. His progress was more like that of an invader than a diplomatist; and the Viennese Court and official world were astonished when he arrived in the Austrian capital, on the afternoon of Tuesday the 8th February, hardly a month after his appointment.[a]

Nobody had heard of the approach of the ambassador; and, when he drove into Vienna with his suite occupying three travelling carriages, a crowd collected and wondered who they were. Bernadotte sent one of his secretaries, Fréville, to the Foreign Minister to announce his arrival and to demand an audience. The Foreign Minister was stupefied. He had assumed

[a] Dry, ii. 367, 368.

that Cobentzel's letter to Bonaparte would have prevented, or at all events delayed, such an event. He was utterly unprepared for the unheralded appearance of the envoy of the Directory.

It probably was fortunate for all concerned that the principal secretary of Embassy, Gaudin, the bearer of Bernadotte's credentials, had not yet arrived, so that it was impossible for the ambassador to act, or to be received, in his official capacity. This gave him time to purchase horses, equipages, and plate, and to overcome the difficulty of obtaining a suitable residence. Several magnates of the capital, including the Metternichs, refused to let their town houses to the ambassador, who finally succeeded in establishing himself in a former palace of the Princes of Lichtenstein, then belonging to Baron de Brandau, and situate in a much-frequented thoroughfare—the Wallner Street.[a]

The news of the ambassador's arrival spread like wildfire, and we find it recorded in a Viennese newspaper of 10th February that his doings and sayings, and comings and goings, were a universal topic of conversation and a general object of interest and curiosity. His striking appearance, easy manners, and simple uniform attracted notice everywhere. A dark military frock, with no ornament except some gold on the collar, and a French general's hat with large tricolour plume, presented a spectacle to which the Viennese were little accustomed in a soldier, still less in an ambassador.[a]

The ambassador's credentials did not arrive for a fortnight (22nd February), and it was not until 27th February that he was in a position to ask for an audience, which he obtained on 2nd March. A writer,

[a] Dry, ii. 369–371.

who has made a special study of the history of this Embassy, describes in graphic terms how Bernadotte with all the easy assurance of a cadet of Gascony,[a] acted the part which, under the old regime, would have fallen to a scion of the Rohans, or Choiseuls, or Noailles, or of some other noble house, and in confident tones, which rang out through the audience-chamber delivered the following address to the Emperor: "The peace signed at Campo Formio between the French Republic and your Imperial Majesty has caused the Directory to entrust me with the post of ambassador to your Majesty. In accepting that honourable and important mission I have yielded to the desire to contribute to a friendship and a just understanding between the Powers, who, in critical times, have measured each other's strength and have learnt the lesson of mutual respect. It will be my principal object to convince your Majesty that the Directory of the French Republic is sincerely attached to its friends, and that it gives unqualified support and protection to its allies. I shall be doubly happy, if I can convince your Majesty of the sincerity of my wishes that your Majesty may enjoy peace and happiness."

The Emperor replied to the following effect: "I am pleased to have made peace with your Republic. It depends upon the Directory to maintain it. I have fought frankly, although my allies deserted me. You are a witness, because you came very near to this place. I have wished for peace. It exists, and I shall preserve it, because I love it, and humanity makes for it. As for yourself, you can do much. I wish you to enjoy yourself here."[b]

The instructions, which Secretary Gaudin handed to Bernadotte on 22nd February, were calculated to

[a] Dry, ii. 376. [b] Masson, 171.

make the ambassador's position even more disagreeable than might have been anticipated.

He was to procure the removal from office of Baron von Thugut, the Austrian Foreign Minister, who was regarded as the particular enemy of the French Republic. To procure the dismissal of the Minister, with whom he was in daily official communication, was a delicate task to throw upon the new ambassador. However, Bernadotte did not shrink from obeying his instructions; and his efforts in this direction bore fruit, but not until he had himself departed from Vienna. He was also to obtain the appointment of an Austrian ambassador to France. He lost no time in pressing this demand; but the Austrian Government excused themselves from compliance, upon economical and other grounds, offering, instead of an ambassador, to send to Paris a Minister in the person of Baron von Degelmann.

The ambassador was directed to assume an aggressive and defiant attitude, whenever the foreign policy of the Republic was involved. He was to take a high and firm tone about Italian affairs, and was to threaten, and if necessary to declare, war, if any intention should be signified of opposing the march of the French army upon Rome. He was to regard himself as placed in the centre of Europe, and as charged with the duty of watching and reporting upon all that was going on in Germany and in the East.

As regards etiquette, he was directed to claim all the prerogatives of the old Monarchy of France—namely, precedence over all ambassadors except the Pope's nuncio. He was to treat the *émigrés* as outlaws and fugitives from French justice, and to protest against any recognition of the Bourbon

"Pretender," or of the orders and decorations which symbolised the *ci-devant* Monarchy of France.[a]

The statesman, into direct conflict with whom the ambassador was thrown by his embarrassing instructions, was Baron von Thugut, the Austrian Foreign Minister, a man of plebeian origin who had risen from the lowest to the highest rank in the diplomatic service. When a young man, he had, through a knowledge of Oriental languages, obtained a place as dragoman to the Austrian Embassy at Constantinople, in which position he had supplemented his small salary by taking a pension for secret service from the King of France. This incident of his early life was a skeleton in his cupboard, which is said to have embarrassed him throughout his career. Bernadotte knew of his secret. Thugut was particularly obnoxious to the French Government, and was soon made aware that the French ambassador was instructed to procure his removal from office, and that he held in reserve, as one of his weapons, the knowledge of the baron's former pension from France.

Thugut's diplomacy consisted in gaining time by multiplying points of detail. His Fabian tactics had kept Austria in chronic hot water. The witty Prince de Ligne nicknamed him "The Baron of the War," in contrast to the title of "Prince of the Peace," which had been conferred in Spain upon Godoy, the favourite of the Spanish King and Queen.[b]

It is interesting, in view of the remarkable circumstances under which Bernadotte's mission terminated, to observe what a large part the emblems of Republican rule played in the politics of the hour.[c] For example, we find him protesting against insults

[a] Masson, 155; Dry, ii. 373–375. [b] Dry, ii. 382.
[c] Masson, 173, 174.

offered at Venice to some French citizens from the island of Zante for wearing the tricolour cockade, and demanding an exemplary punishment (20th March); also requiring reparation for disrespect displayed at Venice to an allegorical device placed over the door of the French Embassy (22nd March). In the same spirit, he demanded for Republicans the privileges, which in Roman history had been claimed for a *civis Romanus*; and among the burning questions, which he raised, the release from detention of French Republican prisoners occupied a prominent place. Numerous and peremptory were the requisitions, which poured into the Austrian Foreign Office from the French Republican Embassy; and it would appear that Bernadotte's audacity met with a large measure of success. The Austrian Government wanted peace; and compliance with most of his demands was granted or promised. It is due to the ambassador to say that the French Government was continually pressing these questions on his attention, and blaming him for undue moderation.

No part of Bernadotte's instructions caused more difficulty than the persistence of the Directory in requiring, through their ambassador, that the French *émigrés* should not be permitted to display the Bourbon decorations, such as the Cross of St. Louis, the white cockade, the *cordon rouge*, and the *cordon bleu*.[a] At the same time he was instructed to protest against the names of the Bourbon family being inscribed in the Austrian official Almanack as the Royal Family of France. So long as Baron von Thugut fell back upon the personal feelings of the Emperor as being involved in these questions, the ambassador could do no more than politely protest, and insist

[a] Masson, 173, 174.

that the mutual relations between Austria and the Republic were involved in the recognition of titles and symbols, which France "had cast out for ever."

But when Thugut imprudently shifted his ground from the personal feelings of the Emperor to the necessity of conciliating the Czar of Russia, the Gascon ambassador saw his opportunity, and made it the occasion for a characteristic outburst: "What matters," he exclaimed, "the mad fury of that tyrant of the north? The French Republic defies and despises his threats. The time will soon come when that tiger in human shape will himself be attacked in the heart of his dominions. All classes of his subjects are weary of his yoke. His extravagant schemes are known to the French people. His intimacy with the Court of London is evidence of his barbarous designs, but his race will soon be run. Poland offers a vast field of glory. High and low alike seek to break their chains. The French Republic has not yet spoken the word, but they reserve the right to do so, when the time arrives."[a]

Thugut was quick to take advantage of the allusion to Poland, and to ask whether the French intended to dispute His Imperial Majesty's right to the Polish territory which he had recently acquired. This query was the occasion for a fresh torrent of Gascon eloquence: "The way in which the French Republic has treated His Majesty the Emperor in the Treaty of Campo Formio, and the immense possessions, which they have relinquished to him, are the best proof of their good intentions towards His Majesty, and afford a guarantee that the French Government, when Poland becomes an independent State, will do something agreeable and advantageous

[a] Masson, 180.

for the House of Austria. But the Directory is not blind to the ambitious projects of the Cabinet of St. Petersburg, whose policy is always to divide its neighbours and embroil them in wars, while taking care to keep out of them itself. When Russia finds her neighbours exhausted and enfeebled by bitter and bloody conflicts, she will follow her crafty system and devastate North Germany like a torrent. The Directory has fathomed her secret designs. They know of the relations which exist between Russia and England. At the same time they treat with consideration the faithful allies, who are bound to France by community of interest. If the Court of Vienna reflects carefully upon her present position, the exhaustion of her military forces, the ruined condition of her finances, the loss of her credit, she will repel the advances made to her by those ambitious neighbours, who desire nothing better than her ruin and her downfall."[a]

What must the Austrian Foreign Minister's feelings have been in listening to this flood of revolutionary rhetoric? What would either of the contending diplomatists have said, if some prophet had foretold that fifteen years would not pass, before the speaker of this diatribe was to march, in the capacity of Crown Prince of the ancient Monarchy of Sweden, across North Germany against France, as the ally of Russia, Austria, and England?

The burning question of the French *émigrés* rendered the ambassador's relations with Austrian society the reverse of smooth and satisfactory. For example, the Princess of Nassau, one of the *grandes dames* of Viennese society, invited Bernadotte's staff to her private theatricals. The ambas-

[a] Masson, 181; Dry, ii. 391, 392.

sador, having become aware that some French *émigrés* would be among the guests, forbade his attachés to avail themselves of the Princess's invitation.[a]

The French Embassy, if not frequented by the aristocrats of Vienna, became the rendezvous of several celebrated artists and musicians. Beethoven and his fellow-student Hummel were constant habitués, and a friendship sprang up between them and the French ambassador.[b]

The ambassador, in spite of his Republican sensitiveness, appears, personally, to have made a favourable impression wherever he appeared. His relations with the Emperor and his Court were marked by courtesy and even cordiality. There was something chivalrous and picturesque about Bernadotte's bearing, which led those who had relations with him to overlook the extravagance of his national and political susceptibilities.

It was observed and recognised that this Gascon soldier of the Revolution, whom Bonaparte had described as "a Republican grafted on a French cavalier," possessed the mind and manners of a gentleman. An incident, which was spoken of everywhere, afforded evidence that, in his demands in reference to the *émigrés*, Bernadotte was merely discharging a diplomatic duty. Among the French exiles who were residing in Vienna was M. de Béthisy, who had been colonel of the Royal-la-Marine Regiment, when Bernadotte was serving in its ranks. Baron von Thugut availed himself of an opportunity of saying to Bernadotte in the hearing of a Court circle, "We have in Vienna a former French officer, an *émigré*, who tells everyone that he once knew you very well." "May I ask his name?" said Bernadotte.

[a] Dry, ii. 396, 397. [b] Masson, 182; Dry, ii. 392.

"M. de Béthisy," replied Thugut. "Yes," said the ambassador, "I knew him very well. He was my colonel, and I had the honour of serving under his orders in the ranks of the Royal-la-Marine Regiment. I owe to the kindness and encouragement of that brave commander whatever qualities I possess. I regret that the obligations of my position do not permit me to receive him at the French Embassy, but please tell him that Bernadotte, his old soldier, preserves for him sentiments of respect and gratitude." This incident was repeated everywhere, and created an excellent impression.[a]

The extreme sensitiveness which his instructions imposed upon the Republican ambassador was illustrated in an incident, which occurred between him and the Archduke Charles, the distinguished military commander, who fixed an hour on 17th March to receive his old antagonist, the French ambassador, in a special audience. The Emperor happened to arrange a hunting-party for 17th March, and commanded the attendance of the Archduke, who postponed the ambassador's audience until the following day. Bernadotte, suspecting a slight to his office, intimated that he withdrew his request for an audience, and no longer wished to be received by His Imperial Highness; and the Archduke left Vienna without meeting the ambassador.[b]

The Empress was a Neapolitan princess; and her influence was all-powerful at the Viennese Court. She had not been able to receive the French ambassador, having on the 2nd of March given birth to a daughter. She intimated, through the Neapolitan *chargé d'affaires*, that she was desirous of taking the earliest opportunity of receiving General Bernadotte,

[a] Dry, ii. 370; Lafosse, 159. [b] Masson, 172; Dry, ii. 394.

and fixed her first reception, on the 10th of April, as the occasion of a special audience. This manner of receiving the French envoy was regarded as a marked favour, and was deeply resented by the Russian ambassador, Rasumowski, who went so far as to speak of resigning.[a] The latter incident suggests that Bernadotte was not eccentric in displaying national sensitiveness, and in standing upon his dignity about trifles.

The Empress was keenly concerned about Neapolitan affairs, and felt anxiety about the fate of her mother, Queen Marie Caroline of Naples. After some conventional phrases had been exchanged about the relations of Austria and France, the Empress observed that she had no belief in the alarming rumours which had been circulated, and referred to the deep interest which she took in Naples and the Neapolitan Royal Family. Bernadotte replied that the appointment, as ambassador to Naples, of Citizen Garat, so well known for his moderation, evidenced the desire of his Government to be agreeable to King Ferdinand and to the Queen, and that this appointment was a conclusive answer to the mischief-makers who endeavoured to embroil France and Naples. He added some observations about the greatness and generosity of the Republic. The Empress was delighted at these reassuring remarks upon the subject nearest to her heart. She changed the conversation, chatted about music to the general, who was known to be the friend of Beethoven and of Hummel, interested herself in his tastes and occupations, and flattered the ambassador by the graciousness of her reception.[b]

Bernadotte's audience with the Empress is described by annalists of Court ceremonials as "*un veritable succès*";[c] but no personal impression, however

[a] Dry, ii. 398. [b] Masson, 177–199. [c] Dry, ii. 399.

favourable, could prevent his position as Republican ambassador at Vienna from being glaringly incongruous. Although the ambassador, in spite of his gasconading diplomacy, did not personally offend the Austrian Court or Austrian society, some of his staff gave cause for serious complaint. They flaunted the tricolour cockade in public places, hissed monarchical allusions in the theatre, and intrigued with the malcontent Polish subjects of the Austrian crown. Responsibility for these extravagances was not imputed to the ambassador himself. But it is not surprising that he felt himself in a false position, and that we find him in April asking the French Government to recall him.[a] His release came, however, sooner than he had hoped or expected.

[a] Masson, 182, 183; Dry, ii. 402, 403.

CHAPTER LI

The Viennese Mob and the Tricolour Flag

April 13, 1798

". . . ce drapeau (tricolore)
Plein de sang dans le bas, et de ciel dans le haut,
. . . . . .
Cette tache de ciel, cette tache de sang."

Rostand, *L'Aiglon*, Acte iii. Sc. 3.

Any competent observer might have foreseen that Bernadotte's mission would come to an untimely end. A bomb had been thrown at a powder magazine, and an explosion was sure to ensue. The *dénouement* was precipitated by taunts and criticisms, which were directed against Bernadotte in the French and German Press. The newspapers began to revive stories of his independent address from the army of Italy, and of the quarrels between the " gentlemen " of his division and the " citizens," who served under Masséna and Augereau. In this way suspicion was thrown upon the sincerity of Bernadotte's republicanism, and upon his reliability as the representative of the Revolutionary Government at the Viennese Court ; and these suspicions soon took shape in a specific charge that he and his suite were ashamed of displaying the national colours.[a]

One of the first steps, which the ambassador had taken, had been to order a picture of " Liberty " from an Austrian artist to be hung over the door of the Embassy. It is said that the police arranged with the artist to supply a wretched caricature.[a] At all events, the picture was rejected. Meanwhile, the

[a] Masson, 185 and note.

Directory sent despatches to Bernadotte, in which they enjoined the display of the national colours, and required him to give a contradiction to some newspaper paragraphs, which had represented the members of his staff as neglecting to wear the tricolour outside the walls of the Embassy.[a]

Bernadotte, in a despatch of 13th April, repelled this charge, explained the delay in setting up the picture of "Liberty," and added: "A tricolour flag occupies temporarily the place destined for the Republican emblem."[a] Upon this day, 13th April, an immense tricolour flag, suitably inscribed, was, between four and five o'clock in the afternoon, which was the Viennese dinner hour, hung out over the door of the Embassy. It is not clear whether this particular mode of displaying the Revolutionary colours was expressly ordered by the French Government, or whether their instructions had been limited to the wearing of the cockade by members of the staff.[b] Even if the hanging out of the flag was the spontaneous act of the ambassador, it certainly accorded with the spirit of his instructions.

It was Easter week; and the youth of Vienna were engaged in organising, either[b] for this very day or for some day in the near future, a fête in honour of the Austrian volunteers, who had come forward in the preceding year for the defence of Vienna against the French army, in which at that time the ambassador had been serving as a general. After the dinner hour the demonstrators paraded the streets, and, when the Republican flag was observed hanging from the balcony of the Embassy, a crowd collected and soon began to hoot and call for the removal of the objectionable emblem.

[a] Masson, 185, 186; Dry, ii. 405.

[b] Compare Masson, 187, with Lafosse, i. 162.

It is not easy to ascertain the sequence of events in a scene of tumult and popular excitement. The task is not rendered less difficult, when we have to pick our steps amid conflicting accounts.

The ambassador and his staff, while at dinner, were disturbed by a noise in the street, followed, as they alleged, by the crashing of stones through the window.[a] Nobody, who has followed Bernadotte's career up to this point, will be surprised to learn that the ambassador descended to the porch and proceeded to harangue the crowd in characteristic Gascon style. Unfortunately, very few, if any, of them were able to understand a word of his speech. According to the French account, he delivered an eloquent protest against the perpetration of such an outrage upon a friendly nation. According to the Austrian account, he called the crowd *canaille*, and threatened that, if they did not depart, he would kill at least six of them. At all events, his speech had no effect upon the people. The tumult increased. The police prayed the ambassador not to expose himself to danger, and were met with a firm refusal.[b]

The ambassador proceeded to write a protest to the Austrian Government, demanding the punishment of the offenders, and threatening to repel all insults with energy. Meanwhile, one of the crowd climbed the balcony and tore down the flag, which was carried in triumph to an open space. The flag was then burnt, and its ashes were carried to the Imperial Palace, before which a demonstration was made in honour of the Emperor.[b]

The crowd were not satisfied with burning the flag. They broke into the Lichtenstein Palace, and having sacked the ground floor, proceeded to mount the stairs. Here they were met by the ambassador

[a] Compare Masson, 189, with Dry, ii. 407. [b] Masson, 189–191.

and his staff, who stood at the head of the staircase with drawn swords, and warned the people that they would sell their lives dearly. Some shots were fired, and two or three persons were wounded. At last, between eleven and one o'clock, a squadron of cuirassiers arrived and dispersed the rioters.[a]

Before the riot was suppressed, Bernadotte had sent three peremptory letters to the Foreign Minister, insisting upon the repudiation of the outrage by proclamation in the streets of Vienna, and upon the arrest and exemplary punishment of its perpetrators. The ambassador declared that he would not remain in Vienna, unless these conditions were complied with, and unless the Government caused the tricolour flag to be replaced by an Austrian civil or military officer.[a]

Thugut sent a reply, in which he expressed his sorrow at the disorder that had taken place; promised to represent the matter immediately to the Emperor; and undertook to have the occurrence investigated with the requisite rigour, and with the sincere interest which the Austrian Government attached to the maintenance of the friendship so happily concluded between the two Powers. Baron von Degelmann carried the letter to the ambassador at 3 a.m. in the morning; but Bernadotte replied that it was utterly inadequate and unacceptable.[a]

Having failed to obtain satisfaction from the Foreign Minister, Bernadotte addressed a letter to the Emperor, demanding his passports and concluding with the following passage, which was evidently intended to be as respectful as the situation allowed:—

"In leaving Vienna, he (the ambassador) will carry away the consoling consciousness of having left nothing undone to convince His Imperial Majesty

[a] Masson, 193–196; Dry, ii. 409–414.

of the peaceful and friendly disposition which the French Government entertain for him. He also rejoices in the belief that His Majesty is profoundly grieved at the attack directed against the representative of a friendly Power, and that all the measures which propriety demanded would have been taken, if His Majesty's intentions had been faithfully fulfilled. The ambassador hopes that the future will confirm his opinion in some striking manner, and that a just reparation will prove to the Executive Directory that His Imperial Majesty is no less desirous, than they are, for the maintenance of a good understanding between the two nations."[a]

Bernadotte sent this by the hand of his young aide-de-camp, Captain Gérard, who, in uniform and wearing the tricolour cockade, proceeded to the palace, and ran considerable danger in carrying out his mission.[a]

The Emperor sent a reply by Count Colleredo, in which he represented his sincere regret at the excesses and disorders of the preceding night, and stated that he had himself commanded them to be put down. He expressed the hope that Bernadotte would not insist upon demanding his passports; promised an inquiry; and assured the ambassador of his anxiety to preserve the good understanding established between the two nations.

Bernadotte replied that it was no longer possible for him to remain at Vienna; that the flag, which recalled to French citizens the foundation and glory of the Republic, had been outraged; and that he could not represent his Government in a city, in which he had received so gross an insult, unless it was disclaimed in the most formal and public manner. He concluded by insisting on an ample reparation, which must include the reinstallation of the flag on the Lichtenstein Palace,—or his passports.[a]

[a] Masson, 198-203; Dry, ii. 413-416.

On the evening of the 14th of April, the passports were sent to the ambassador, accompanied by an earnest request that he would leave the city quietly and at night, so as to avoid the risk of a hostile demonstration. Bernadotte replied that he intended to leave on the morrow at noon, "in all the solemnity of broad daylight."[a] At the stated hour he and his staff entered their carriages with their tricolour plumes and cockades displayed in the face of the assembled crowds. The Government sent a cavalry escort, and lined the streets with infantry, in order to prevent any further disturbance. We may safely surmise that the "Baron of the War" heaved a sigh of relief, when the Gascon diplomat had departed with his passports and his tricolours, although he left behind him a quarrel which had all the appearance of a *casus belli*. Thugut himself was under notice to quit. As the result of Bernadotte's representations, he had been replaced as head of the Foreign Office by Count Cobentzel, who had been summoned to Vienna from Rastadt for that purpose.

A number of the foreign ambassadors and ministers at the Court of Vienna signed a declaration, laying the blame for the riot upon Bernadotte's imprudence. It was pointed out that it was not the custom for ambassadors in Vienna to hoist flags, and that no French ambassador under the *ancien régime* had ever done so.[b] Bernadotte's answer to the charge of innovation was, from his point of view, a sufficient one, namely, that he was acting in accordance with his instructions.

The accounts of the incident, which were published in England, came principally from Viennese sources. In some of them the ambassador was repre-

[a] Masson, 204; Dry, ii. 417. [b] *Moniteur*, 10th May 1798.

GENERAL BERNADOTTE, SOLDIER AMBASSADOR.
After the picture by Hilaire Le Dru.

To face page 318.

sented as having provoked the riot in order to find an excuse for retreat from an uncongenial post.[a] Misrepresentations and exaggerations were indulged in on both sides. For example, unfounded charges of intoxication were levelled by the Austrians against the ambassador and his staff, and by the French against the rioters. Both sides were drunk, but not with wine. They were blinded by passions, which were symbolised by the tricolour flag, and were inflamed by five years of hate and of conflict.

Much has been said from different standpoints as to the cause of this *émeute*. The truth appears to be that the affair was unpremeditated on both sides, and arose out of a bizarre and incongruous situation. The position of an ambassador of the French Republic in Vienna was an impossible one. The wisest and most experienced of diplomats would have failed to reconcile the aggressive spirit of revolutionary France with the unsympathetic atmosphere of aristocratic Vienna. There was no chance of success for the inexperienced Gascon, whom it had pleased Bonaparte to pitchfork from a camp into a court.

Similar scenes, arising out of the same incongruity of national aims and methods, occurred in other European capitals. The ambassadors of the Republic, at Berlin, Rome, and Madrid met with adventures of the same kind. But none of them created such a widespread sensation. The Viennese *affaire* was a nine days' wonder all over Europe, and was not quickly forgotten. The incident rehabilitated Bernadotte with the Republicans of France, by whom his attitude was regarded as the embodiment of what they admired under the name of *fierté républicaine*. On

[a] See *A Faithful Account of the Riot in Vienna, from the German*. London, 1798.

the other hand, it caused him to be looked on by moderates and monarchists as a type of what they detested, under the name of "Republican insolence." They dubbed him "the man of Vienna with the little flag." In England the same note was struck and dwelt upon. For example, we find the *Times* of a later date, in an article headed "Peace" (9th October 1798), using Bernadotte's Viennese ambassadorship as a powerful argument against coming to terms with France. "What would a peace avail us which would grant protection for other Bernadottes to come to this country and diffuse among us the seeds of a revolution, as the French ambassadors have done in Spain and other countries?"[a]

Metternich was a young man at the time, on the lower rungs of the diplomatic ladder. He seems to have derived some consolation from the reflection that it was the Lichtenstein Palace, and not the Metternich town-house, which had suffered in the riot; for we find him writing to his wife on 22nd April: "Thank Heaven we did not let our house to the ambassador; there is no depending on these men."[b]

We are all familiar with the cynical definition of an ambassador as a statesman who is "sent abroad to lie for his country"; and Lord Morley has recently reminded us that diplomacy "has somewhere been called the art of passing bad money."[c] These happy phrases do not fit Bernadotte's Viennese ambassadorship. Apart from bluff and bravado, his diplomatic methods were not lacking in directness; and, if he jingled his money in true Gascon fashion, it was all of the current coinage, and came fresh from the Mint of the Republic which he represented.

[a] The *Times*, 9th October 1798.

[b] Metternich, i., 22nd April 1798. [c] *Politics and History*, 110.

CHAPTER LII

An Ambassador's Disgrace with Honour

April 15–May 29, 1798

"I receive with respect your approbation of my military and diplomatic conduct. . . . It gives me pleasure to think that the time is not far distant when the policy of the Government will permit them to inform the French people of the exact truth."—*Extract from Bernadotte's letter refusing the offer of the ambassadorship to the Batavian Republic, 29th May* 1798.

Bernadotte left Vienna 15th April. At Markel he passed Count Cobentzel. The Count was on his way to Vienna to succeed Thugut, who, owing to Bernadotte's representations, had ceased to be Foreign Minister. Bernadotte had met Cobentzel in Italy, and was about to address him from his carriage window, but the Austrian, being ill-informed as to what had occurred, and feeling embarrassed as to what to say or do, crammed his hat over his eyes, and passed without recognition. The indignant Gascon attributed this discourtesy to either shame or cowardice.[a]

Bernadotte reached Rastadt on 23rd April, and was obliged to stay there for nearly a month. He sent to the Directory an emphatic letter, demanding his justification and his recall to Paris.[a] Metternich, writing from Rastadt, speaks of having met him, and of his evident annoyance at the humiliation to which he was subjected by the Directory's hesitation to vindicate his action.[b]

The Viennese imbroglio came to a crisis in the delicate game, which was being played between Bona-

[a] Masson, 215; Dry, ii. 433–436.

[b] Metternich, i., 30th April 1798.

parte and the Directory; and the players in that game found it no easy matter to decide how the affair of the flag could be best turned to advantage. Bonaparte was, at this moment, the designated commander of the expedition to Egypt. Troops and stores were being collected at Toulon, and the fleet was in readiness to weigh anchor. The Directory favoured the Egyptian enterprise, in order to rid themselves of the ambitious general and of his devoted followers. Bonaparte was in doubt as to which way his star led; and the Viennese incident increased his hesitation. He had a good understanding with Cobentzel, with whom he had arranged the Treaty of Campo Formio. He received confidential communications from the Austrian authorities, giving their account of the matter, and he took up their case. Talleyrand, to whom Thugut had promptly transmitted his version of the affair, associated himself with Bonaparte. With Bonaparte and Talleyrand hunting in couples, Bernadotte ran a serious risk of being sacrificed by a vacillating Government.[a]

When the Directory, on 23rd April, received Bernadotte's despatch informing them of the affair, and also heard a full account of the transaction from the lips of Villet-Fréville, the attaché, and Maleshuski, the Pole, whom the ex-ambassador had sent to carry the news to his Government, their first impulse was to treat the incident as a national affront, and to demand a public reparation. But, before they had adopted any definite plan of action, Bonaparte came to them with Talleyrand, and severely censured Bernadotte for imprudence, hotheadedness, and failure to understand the popular sentiment of the Viennese. Barras replied: "What would you have had him do? Should he have

[a] Barras, iii. 207–213; (E.) iii. 362–370. Dry, ii. 421–424.

died? It would truly have been a Roman act, worthy of ancient Rome, at least, if not of modern Rome. Well, then, citizens" (addressing Bonaparte and Talleyrand), "you may put such high-flown maxims into practice yourselves. Moreover" (addressing Bonaparte), "was it not you who worried us to make a diplomat of Bernadotte, and who had him deprived of the command of the army of Italy?"[a]

The Directory were puzzled how to act. On the one hand, there was the insult to the sensitive national honour; on the other hand, there was the seriousness of entering upon a war, in which Bonaparte would be the only possible commander-in-chief. They wavered from day to day. Yielding for a short time to Bonaparte's representations, they modified their "first thoughts" of demanding reparation, and directed Talleyrand to write a conciliatory letter to the Austrian Foreign Minister, announcing that Bonaparte was repairing to Rastadt with full powers to terminate all differences between the two countries. This letter delighted the Austrian Court, who resolved to send Cobentzel to Rastadt to meet Bonaparte.[b]

The Directory did not, however, adhere to this line of policy. Alarmed at the dictatorial tone, which Bonaparte was adopting in his relations with his own and foreign governments, and fearing that he was seeking a fresh opportunity for gliding into prominence and power, they resolved to hasten his departure for Toulon.[c] When, in the course of a heated interview, he threatened the resignation of his command, Rewbell, taking up a pen, handed it to him, and coolly observed: "Sign, Citizen General." Bonaparte did not sign, and for once retired worsted. Barras followed up this rebuff by

[a] Barras, iii. 207–213. [b] Dry, ii. 421–427. [c] Sorel, v. 308, 309.

giving him a private hint that his destination was Egypt, not Rastadt, and that he had no time to lose.

Bonaparte was not sorry to go. He had come to the conclusion that there was no glory to be gained from a diplomatic duel over the affair of the flag. He knew that for him "the pear was not yet ripe"; but he calculated, with unerring foresight, that it would ripen under the rays of an Eastern sun. This was about the beginning of May. In a few days he started for Toulon, leaving with Talleyrand a letter of explanation for Cobentzel. He had embarked, and was at sea before the 20th of May.[a]

Bonaparte had not been many days at sea, before the attitude of the French Government towards the Viennese incident took a sudden change. On 13th May, just a month after the *émeute* in Vienna, Bernadotte received a letter from Talleyrand informing him of his appointment to the command of the 5th Military Division, the head-quarters of which were at Strasburg. But the ex-ambassador was not to be pacified so easily. On 16th May he replied, refusing the command, and started for Paris. His frame of mind is expressed in a letter to Joseph Bonaparte,[b] in which he complained of the Government's ingratitude and silence, which might compel him to publish a true account of the incident; and he pointed to Thugut's retirement from the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a virtual triumph, which the Government should follow up by firm action.

The Directory were unable, or unwilling, to take any decided course; and, when Bernadotte arrived in Paris, on about the 24th of May, Talleyrand told him that "une réparation éclatante" was impossible.

[a] Dry, ii. 428, 429; *Vers Brumaire*, 281, 282 n.

[b] *Mémoires, etc., d'un Homme d'État*, v. 519, 520.

At the same time the wily Foreign Minister devised a way of making public amends to Bernadotte without offending Austria. On 27th May Bernadotte received an offer of the appointment of ambassador to the newly created Batavian Republic. It was conveyed by a letter of Talleyrand's, in which the Minister represented the Directory as "always mindful of the services which you have rendered in the two careers to which you have been successively called," and as "being unwilling to allow your zeal and your talents to remain inactive."[a] To this offer Bernadotte replied in a characteristic letter, dated 29th May.

"CITIZEN DIRECTORS,—The Minister of Foreign Relations has informed me that you have nominated me Minister Plenipotentiary to the Batavian Republic. The offer of such an honourable employment cannot but afford gratification. The inestimable advantage of living, although separated from my native land, among men who know the value of the social guarantee, would be a motive to lead me to accept. But, you have already been made acquainted with my wishes, and with my disinclination for the diplomatic career. I have had the honour to explain myself to you on that subject in a despatch anterior to recent events at Vienna. You know that the Embassy to the Imperial Court was not wished for by me, and that my acceptance of it was intended by me as an act of obedience, and as a fresh mark of devotion to the Republic. If it were my destiny to reside with the inheritors of the fame of John de Witt and of van Tromp, the Batavian Republic would find in me a sincere lover of their glory, and a warm champion of their welfare. Your knowledge of men will not fail to enable you to find in my successor the same purity of intention and zeal for duty. I receive with respect your approbation of my military and diplomatic conduct. All that concerns my diplomatic career has a certain interest for me on account of the errors, into which several newspapers have fallen,

[a] *Mémoires, etc., d'un Homme d'État*, v. 521, 522.

in the accounts which they have given to the public. It gives me pleasure to think that the time is not far distant when the policy of the Government will permit them to inform the French people of the exact truth. I beg you, Citizen Directors, to receive the tribute of my gratitude. You have rightly felt that the reputation of a man, who had contributed to place upon its pedestal the statue of liberty, was a national property."[a]

These letters were published in the *Moniteur*, and were given an official character. There seems to be no reason to doubt that their publication was arranged with Bernadotte, and sanctioned by the Government; and that it was intended, in this way, to give to the chagrined and indignant ex-ambassador the best reparation that the circumstances admitted of. He left the Directory under an obligation to him by his dignified reserve under the shower of misrepresentations, by which he had been assailed; while his public refusal of a high command and of another ambassadorship stamped him as a man, who was considered by his Government fit for the highest positions in the military and diplomatic services.

It remains to follow the Viennese incident to its close. France and Austria sent their respective envoys to a conference, which was held at Seltz. The Austrian plenipotentiary took up the attitude that the Bernadotte incident should be dealt with as one of the numerous differences, which had accumulated between the two countries since the Treaty of Campo Formio; while the French plenipotentiary demanded, *inter alia*, the replacement of the tricolour flag, the punishment of the leaders of the *émeute*, and a full apology.

It is needless to say that these demands were not complied with. The limit to which Austria would go

[a] *Moniteur*, 1st June 1798; Dry, ii. 439, 440.

was to declare that the Emperor was willing to proceed against the parties responsible for the *émeute*, on condition that the Directory, at the same time and in some striking way, should express their disapprobation of General Bernadotte's conduct.

After seven weeks, spent in prolonged interviews and in the exchange of diplomatic notes, the conference broke up. No serious effort was afterwards made to revive this particular controversy; and the incident of the Viennese flag passed into history. When the Directory declared war against Austria in the following year, it was raked up, and was included in a long list of *casus belli*. But, after eleven months of tolerant acquiescence, it must have appeared to the belligerents as the réchauffage of a very cold dish.[a]

[a] Sorel, v. 324, 325; Masson, 223–248; Dry, ii. 440–446.

PART VIII

THE DEATH OF D'AMBERT—THE MARRIAGE OF BERNADOTTE—THE ARMIES OF MAINZ, ITALY, AND OBSERVATION—THE 30TH PRAIRIAL

JULY 1798–JUNE 1799

"J'ai consenti à épouser Bernadotte, lorsqu'on m'a dit qu'il était homme à tenir tête à Napoléon."—DESIRÉE CLARY.

PART VIII

THE DEATH OF D'AMBERT—THE MARRIAGE OF BERNADOTTE—THE ARMIES OF MAINZ, ITALY, AND OBSERVATION—THE 30TH PRAIRIAL

JULY 1798–JUNE 1799

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CHAPTER LIII

TRIAL AND EXECUTION OF COLONEL D'AMBERT—BERNADOTTE'S UNSUCCESSFUL INTERCESSION

JULY 1798

"It is the only price I ask for my services."—*Bernadotte interceding for Colonel d'Ambert, July* 1798.

SHORTLY after Bernadotte's return from Vienna, an incident occurred, which sheds light both upon the temper of the time, and upon the character of the man. It concerns the Marquis d'Ambert, ex-colonel of the Royal-la-Marine Regiment, whom Bernadotte, when a non-commissioned officer, had saved from the fury of a Marseilles mob.[a] After that incident, which occurred in 1790, the Marquis retired from the army and left France.

D'Ambert returned to France, after a brief absence; but, in the meantime, his name had been inscribed on the list of *émigrés*. It was always asserted by him and by his family, that he had not emigrated, and that the inclusion of his name on the fatal list was made in a department, where he had no property, and that it never came to his knowledge.

One of the consequences of the *coup d'état* of the 18th Fructidor (4th September 1797) had been the passage of a law, under which any individual, whose name was on the list of *émigrés*, was liable, if found in France, to be brought before a Military Commission, and to be sentenced to death.

This terrible law was a sequel of the confiscations of the Revolution. It was dictated by the appre-

[a] See Chapter V., pages 30–35 *supra*.

hension of claims and reprisals, and by overpowering motives of self-interest. Much of the property of the *émigrés* had been converted to public or private purposes; and the new proprietors did not wish their possessions to be haunted by the apparition of these grim *revenants*.

In February 1798 somebody had put this law in motion against d'Ambert. An order was made for his arrest, and he became the object of a police search, which, in the first instance, was not a very active one. His old sergeant and friend, Bernadotte, had just been sent as ambassador to Vienna; and d'Ambert foolishly supposed that he might serve himself by advertising his association with the popular Republican general. He accordingly took up his pen and wrote a letter, which appeared in the *Ami des Lois* of the 11th Ventôse, An. V. (1st March 1798), in which he claimed the credit of having promoted Bernadotte to the rank of adjutant, when he was serving in the ranks of the old Royal-la-Marine Regiment, and of having received him as a guest in his house in the winter of 1790 and 1791. He added, with a touch of feeling: "His good fortune gives me some consolation for the unmerited persecution, to which I have been subjected for the last month. . . ."

If d'Ambert had remained quiet, he might have escaped discovery. But, by drawing attention to himself, he sealed his fate. The Directory ordered the Minister of Police to bring him to justice, and every effort was made to track the unfortunate Marquis to his hiding-place. D'Ambert succeeded in eluding his pursuers for nearly three months; and it was not until 22nd June that the Minister of Police was able to announce his arrest, and to bring him before the Military Commission, which made no difficulty

about finding him guilty and condemning him to be shot in the Field of Mars.[a]

D'Ambert's daughter presented a petition to the Council of 500, praying for a reprieve and for a reference of the case to a committee for reconsideration and report. The petition, which came before the Council on 2nd July 1798, stated that d'Ambert had never emigrated; and that the inscription of his name on the list of *émigrés* was made in a department, where he had no property and had never resided. It appealed to the Council not to allow persons to be struck down by hasty and mistaken applications of the law.

The debate[b] upon this petition serves to remind us that at this period (July 1798), four years after the fall of Robespierre, the merciless passions, that had filled the tumbrils, were still awake. Only one deputy, Deschamps, had the courage to support the petition; and the Council followed the lead of the Jacobin, Briot, who employed the stock arguments, which, in moments of political panic and passion, have often availed to prevent the scrupulous and discriminating consideration of individual cases. Briot's exordium might be taken as a model for such an occasion: "If ever the function of a legislator is painful, it is when the law orders him to shut his ears and steel his heart to the cry of suffering. There can be no doubt that suffering is worthy of respect, that the cries of the victims of misfortune are made to rend the heart, and that the shades of those who perish deserve our pity. But the shades of our defenders, who have fallen on our frontier, speak still more eloquently. Their wandering Manes cry to us for vengeance. It is the *émigrés* who have plunged the dagger in our

[a] *Paris pendant 1798*, xix. 55. [b] *Moniteur*, 6th July 1798.

hearts." Proceeding in this strain, the orator quickly diverted the attention of the House from the facts and merits of d'Ambert's case, and induced them to pass unanimously to the order of the day.

Bernadotte went to the Directory, and asked the life of Marquis d'Ambert as the only reward of his services to the Republic. The episode had better be described in the words of Barras, who, as a Director, took part in it :—

"After having revealed," he writes, "perhaps somewhat severely, the weak side of Bernadotte as a public man, I should consider myself worthy of censure, were I to overlook traits, which reflect credit on the private individual. Bernadotte had heard of the arrest of the colonel of his old regiment of Royal-la-Marine, in which he had served as a private and as a sergeant; this was the Marquis d'A——, who, proscribed pursuant to the law against the *émigrés*, had been recognised while strolling about Paris, arrested, and turned over to a Military Commission. It was on this occasion that Bernadotte's sincere and generous soul stood revealed to us. He promptly called on the Directorate to beg that his former colonel's offence might be condoned. 'It is,' he said, 'the only price I ask for my services.' Bernadotte had already, on a former occasion, at the time of a riot in Marseilles, saved the life of M. d'A——; in those days he was nothing more than a sergeant. Bernadotte, who had in the meanwhile become a general, was not to be so successful on this occasion. He had to deal with a director, Merlin, a former Minister of Justice, a man far more terrible than the popular fury of the early days of the Revolution. I moved that M. d'A—— be conducted to the frontier. Merlin called for his execution, which took place."[a]

Madame de Staël refers to the incident in the following passage :—

"I returned to Paris; every day made us tremble for some new victims, who were involved in the

[a] Barras, iii. 151, 152; (E.) iii. 193.

general persecution that was carried on against emigrants and priests. The Marquis d'Ambert, who had been Bernadotte's colonel previous to the Revolution, was arrested and brought before a Military Commission—a terrible tribunal, the existence of which is sufficient to prove the tyranny of the Government. Bernadotte sought the directors and asked of them, as the sole reward of all his services, the pardon of his colonel. They were inflexible; they gave the name of justice to an equal distribution of misery."[a]

Madame de Chastenay, a friend of Madame d'Ambert, writes: "Bernadotte ran to the aid of his old comrade. I must do justice to his goodness of heart. He spared no possible effort. . . . He implored the Directory, with tears in his eyes, to accord him the life of M. d'Ambert as the only recompense of his services."[b]

Bernadotte was not satisfied with interceding for his old colonel with the Government. He induced the gendarmes, who formed d'Ambert's escort, to lose sight of their prisoner, who was thus afforded an opportunity for escape. D'Ambert preferred to trust to the merits of his case, and to some safe-conduct, in the efficacy of which he placed an unfounded reliance. He allowed himself to be retaken, and missed his last chance of eluding the fate, from which his old adjutant did his best to save him.[c]

[a] *Considerations on the French Revolution* (transl.), ii. 190, 191. Larevellière-Lépeaux attempted to defend the Directory from these observations of Madame de Staël (Lépeaux, ii. 141).

[b] Madame de Chastenay, i. 352. This lady met Bernadotte at a reception at Barras', and describes him thus: "Bernadotte, with his tall figure and black hair, and teeth of dazzling white, but without brilliancy of wit. He was a man, whom one could not meet in a salon without remarking him and inquiring his name" (i. 367).

[c] Pingaud, 36.

CHAPTER LIV

THE GIRLHOOD OF DESIRÉE CLARY

1777–1798

"Desirée Clary was intended for earthly honours. . . . She is betrothed to Joseph, then to Napoleon, then to Duphot; she refuses Junot and would be glad to accept Marmont; at last she marries Bernadotte. . . . Bernadotte, the former sergeant . . . places the crown of Sweden on the head of the little bourgeoise of Marseilles."—M. H. HOUSSAYE.

"Il était dans ma destinée d'être recherchée par des héros."—DESIRÉE CLARY.

IN the summer of 1798 Bernadotte enjoyed a brief rest, which enabled him to take part in the social life of Paris. Among the foremost families of the new Parisian society were those of Joseph and Lucien Bonaparte, both members of the Council of 500. They were the best known of that remarkable group of brothers and sisters, who were beginning to bask in the rays of the rising sun. Bernadotte became a friend of Joseph Bonaparte, whose family circle included his sister-in-law, Desirée Clary. She was in her twenty-first year, and the story of her girlhood has few parallels, even in the wild annals of the Revolution.

Desirée's father, François Clary, said to be of Irish descent, was a prosperous merchant of Marseilles, who married twice and had thirteen children. Two of the younger children of the second marriage were Julie and Desirée. Marseilles was a hotbed of revolutionary fever; and in the years 1793 and 1794 the local terror reached its height. Many citizens of Marseilles were imprisoned, and more than four hundred were executed. The Clary family were the

object of distrust and suspicion. Madame Clary's brother was an *émigré*. François Clary was known to be rich, and to have applied for letters of *noblesse*. The household lived in perpetual fear. One of the boys was driven to commit suicide by the horrors of his surroundings. The finding of his body in the garden well, plunged the family in grief and mourning. François Clary died, and his wealth and unpopularity descended upon his son Étienne.

Nothing seemed more probable than that Julie and Desirée might experience the fate, from which youth and innocence failed to save many young ladies of their station. It is strange to reflect that the Terror, instead of sending them to the guillotine, led to an acquaintanceship, which made Julie Queen of Naples and afterwards of Spain, and opened Desirée's path to the throne of Sweden.

Étienne Clary was twice arrested; and it was his second arrest which led to the acquaintance of the Bonapartes and Clarys, and brought in its train such strange and dazzling consequences for Julie and Desirée. Étienne's wife sought and obtained an interview with Albitte, the Representative of the People, who for the moment was the most powerful man in the city. Madame Étienne Clary was accompanied, upon her errand, by her sister-in-law Desirée. When the anxious wife was introduced into the office of Albitte, Desirée was left in the outer hall or waiting-room, where she fell asleep, overcome by fatigue. Madame Clary, in her eagerness to obtain her husband's release, for which Albitte gave her an order, hurried away, leaving the girl behind.

Desirée slept on, until she was awakened by the opening of the door of the audience-room and

the approach of a young assistant of Albitte, who offered to escort her to her home, and in that way made the acquaintance of her family. This was Joseph Bonaparte, a man of gracious and courteous manners, who quickly ingratiated himself with the Clarys, and introduced to them his younger brother, the general, Napoleon. The Bonapartes were at this time ruined refugees from Corsica. The general had not yet begun to mount the ladder of fame. The fortunes of the family were at their lowest ebb.

Joseph wished to marry Desirée, and, as she was hardly of marriageable age, was ready to wait for his bride. Napoleon formed different plans. He pronounced the elder sister, Julie, better suited for Joseph, and designed Desirée for himself. Joseph deferred to the wishes and commands of his imperious younger brother, and married Julie Clary on 1st August 1794. This is not the place to speak of the tender feelings with which Desirée inspired Napoleon. They are evidenced by his letters written to Joseph between May and September 1795, in the last of which (6th September) he intimated that the affair "must be either concluded or broken off."[a] Suffice it to say that those tender feelings were deep enough, and lasted long enough, to leave an enduring impression upon the memory of the future Emperor. Napoleon, throughout the whole period of his predominance, felt and showed an affectionate interest in Desirée; and, as sister-in-law of King Joseph, she was treated as *apparentée* to the Imperial family.

"Desirée," wrote Montholon at St. Helena, "avait été la première inclination de Napoléon."[b] She remained so until he came under the fascination of Josephine de Beauharnais. After Napoleon's marriage,

[a] *Roi Joseph*, i. 129–153. [b] Montholon, *Mélanges*, i. 217.

DESIRÉE CLARY.
Who married General Bernadotte, August 17, 1798, and became Queen of Sweden.
After the portrait by Gerard.

To face page 338.

Desirée joined the family circle of her brother-in-law Joseph Bonaparte, who held a diplomatic post at Genoa, where General Duphot became a suitor for her hand. Napoleon said of Duphot that he was "un général de la plus belle espérance";[a] and when Joseph Bonaparte became ambassador at Rome, Napoleon sent Duphot to Rome, with a letter commending his suit.[b] An engagement ensued between Duphot and Desireé which was cut short by a tragedy.

An *émeute* occurred outside the Roman Embassy, arising out of the bitter animosity which existed between the French invaders and the Roman patriots. Duphot sallied forth, sword in hand. Desirée and the other ladies of the Embassy assembled on the staircase, listening anxiously to the firing and noise. Presently Duphot's body was carried into the courtyard, and Desirée saw her suitor die from his wounds at the foot of the stairs. It has already been related[c] how it came about that Duphot's death, which occurred in December 1797, precipitated Bernadotte into a diplomatic career. Joseph Bonaparte soon afterwards obtained his recall from Rome, and settled in Paris, where Bernadotte, on his return from very similar experiences at Vienna, was admitted to the intimacy of his family circle.

Desirée was not without suitors in Paris. Junot, afterwards Duke of Abrantès and husband of the celebrated authoress of delightful memoirs, was one of them. He sent Marmont, afterwards Marshal and Duke of Ragusa, to convey his proposals. Desirée declined them, but is said to have confessed that she might have given a different answer, if the messenger had spoken for himself.

[a] Las Cases, iv. 103. [b] *Corr. inéd. de N.*, 11th November 1797.
[c] Chapter XLVIII., pages 287, 288 *supra*.

M. Houssaye has alluded to Desirée's suitors in an interesting passage :—

"Desirée Clary," he writes, "was intended for earthly honours, and at least they rested lightly on her head. Let us recapitulate. She is betrothed to Joseph, then to Napoleon, then to Duphot; she refuses Junot and would be glad to accept Marmont; at last she marries Bernadotte. With Joseph she would have been an Imperial princess, Queen of Naples and of Spain; with Napoleon, Empress of the French; with Duphot, probably, maréchale and duchess; with Junot, Duchess d'Abrantès; with Marmont, maréchale and Duchess of Ragusa. Bernadotte, the former sergeant of marines, places the crown of Sweden on the head of this little bourgeoise of Marseilles."

Desirée said of herself, "Il était dans ma destinée d'être recherchée par des héros." She has been hit off by Emile Faguet as "la petite Marseillaise gaie et rieuse."[a] Her personality will be better understood if we look forward and observe her, when she was transformed into a crown princess. A lady, presenting her daughters, remarked proudly, "Your Royal Highness knows that they are the daughters of a prince of the Holy Roman Empire." "I know," replied the Crown Princess, "that I am the daughter of a merchant of Marseilles."[b] If, in 1810, it had been necessary for Desirée to change her religion, Bernadotte would never have become a king. He followed the example of his compatriot Henri IV., thinking perhaps that "Stockholm valait bien la confession d'Augsburg." But Desirée thought differently; and the Mass was always celebrated for the Queen in her Swedish Palace. It may be inferred that, if Desirée was not a striking personality, she was frank, unaffected, single-minded, sincere,

[a] *Revue Bleue*, July 1899. [b] Lady Sarah Lyttelton, 545.

and quite unspoiled by her extraordinary elevation from one high position to another. Perhaps she was in a sense "to the manner born"; for, if the tradition of her Irish ancestry be well founded, she could claim kinship with a race not less ancient than the Vasas.

CHAPTER LV

BERNADOTTE'S MARRIAGE TO DESIRÉE CLARY

AUGUST 17, 1798

"Un séduisant cavalier, et semblant destiné à un grand avenir."—A. DRY.

"C'était un charmeur pour ceux qui avaient à lui obéir. Mais lui-même ne savait pas obéir."—*General Zurlinden, writing of Bernadotte.*

"Bernadotte looked astonishingly like all the portraits of the great Condé. His fine appearance, the nobleness of his manners, and his politeness aided the resemblance, which he completed in other respects."—MADAME DE GENLIS.

"He was tall and slight; his eagle countenance was exactly like that of the great Condé. His thick black hair harmonised with the colourless complexion of the inhabitants of Béarn, his native province. . . . It is impossible to meet a man of more seductive manners and conversation. . . ."—COUNT DE ROCHECHOUART.

IT was after the crowded experiences, which have been related in the last chapter, that Desirée's path was crossed by General Bernadotte. He was then thirty-five years of age. M. A. Dry paints him as "un séduisant cavalier, et semblant destiné à un grand avenir."[a] His military reputation was at its zenith, standing at a higher level than it ever reached under the Empire. Barras tells us that after the departure of the Egyptian expedition Bernadotte was undoubtedly in the front rank of the generals who remained in France.[b] He was also a man, if not *the* man, of the hour, fresh from the dramatic scene in Vienna, of which he had been the central figure. Although the Government had, to some extent, sacrificed him to the exigencies of their

[a] Dry, ii. 450. [b] Barras, iii. 311; (E.) iii. 392.

policy, he was known to possess the sympathy of the army and of the public, and he had been offered an Embassy and a high command.

There was also about Bernadotte a charm of manner which was acknowledged by everybody, except his military and political rivals. General Zurlinden happily hits him off in the following sentence: "C'était un charmeur pour ceux qui avaient à lui obéir. Mais lui-même ne savait pas obéir."[a] Military and political rivalry did not affect the impression which he created in society. When he became Crown Prince, Madame de Staël and his courtiers saw in him a combination of Francis I. and Louis XIV.; and it was to him that Madame de Staël wrote, when an exile: "Your fiery glance is my fatherland." Madame Récamier always admired him, and admitted him to the circle of her intimate friends. Madame de Genlis, who knew what was best both of the old and the new regime, said of him: "Bernadotte looked astonishingly like all the portraits of the great Condé,—his fine appearance, the nobleness of his manners, and his politeness aided the resemblance, which he completed in other respects."[b] He made a host of enemies; but he was successful in winning and keeping the friendship of Kléber, Marceau, Jourdan, Championnet, Ney, and of many others. A surprising example of his power of gaining and retaining affection was his complete and lasting conquest of his adopted father and mother, the old King and Queen of Sweden, who loved him as a son, from the day when this strange child of the Revolution was received as Crown Prince of their ancient kingdom.[c] Even the Queen-Dowager, the

[a] Zurlinden, 64. [b] Madame de Genlis (transl.), v. 122.
[c] *La Fin d'une Dynastie*, 487.

widow of Gustavus III., said of him: "C'est un prince tout à fait aimable."[a] A pleasing pen-portrait was drawn by the Count de Rochechouart, a French aristocrat and A.D.C. of the Emperor of Russia who met him in 1813.[b] The Count de Rochechouart wrote:—

"He was tall and slight; his eagle countenance was exactly like that of the great Condé; his thick black hair harmonised with the colourless complexion of the inhabitants of Béarn, his native province. His appearance on horseback was very martial, perhaps a little theatrical, but his daring and coolness on the bloodiest battlefields made one willing to forget this defect. It is impossible to meet a man of more seductive manners and conversation; he captivated me entirely, and if I had been attached to his person, I should have been sincerely devoted to him."[b]

Thiébault, a Republican officer who met him in 1797, used similar language, when describing the impression which Bernadotte made upon him.[c] A vivid sentence may be added from the pen of General Zurlinden, a distinguished soldier and writer of the present day, who describes Bernadotte as "tall, well-built, with a handsome appearance. His eyes were bright and piercing. His features were energetic, clear cut, in the style of Condé. He worked hard, was eloquent, and a leader of men."[d]

It has also to be remembered that Bernadotte, with all his Gascon extravagance, had much dignity and nobility of character. He set before himself indefinite but lofty ideals of conscience, honour, and chivalry; and the story of his life, from the time that it came under the searchlight, was singularly free from personal blemish.

[a] Schefer, 56.
[b] Rochechouart, 248.
[c] Thiébault (E.), i. 325, 326.
[d] Zurlinden, 61.

But what, more than anything else, excited Desirée's interest in Bernadotte, and opened the way to her heart, was the reputation which he had acquired of having the courage and force of character to stand out against the great man, who had been her fiancé, and was now the husband of Josephine. She afterwards said that she had consented to marry Bernadotte, when they told her "qu'il était homme à tenir tête à Napoléon."[a]

Among those who signed the marriage register, on 17th August 1798, were Joseph Bonaparte and his wife Julie, and Lucien Bonaparte and his wife Christine. Madame Junot, then Mademoiselle Louise Permon, was present at the wedding. She criticises Desirée for her lack of will and force of character, and denies to Bernadotte any halo of romance; but she gives a not discouraging glimpse of the commencement of the Bernadotte *ménage* :—

"When she met Bernadotte, she (Desirée) had a face of which I shall say nothing, because we were then thought to be exceedingly like each other. She had very fine eyes and a most pleasing smile. Lastly, she had not so much *embonpoint* as at the time of her departure for Sweden. She was altogether a very agreeable person. She was fond of her husband, which was natural enough, but that fondness became a downright annoyance to the poor Béarnais who, having nothing of a halo of romance in his composition, was sometimes extremely perplexed by the part. She was continually in tears, when he had gone out, because he was absent, when he was going out more tears, and when he came home she wept because he might have to go away again—perhaps in a week, but, at any rate, he would have to go."[b]

Bernadotte's marriage smoothed his path to a

[a] *Desirée*, par Hochschild, 32.

[b] D'Abrantès, *Mémoires*, ii. 154, 155; (transl.) i. 286, 287.

dazzling future; but it placed him in a position, which was calculated to damp his fine enthusiasms, and to check the coherent development of the nobler side of his character. His marriage brought him into close and intimate relations with all the Bonaparte family. Lucien, Louis, Eliza, Pauline, and Caroline quickly came to look upon the fiery, fascinating Gascon as a brother and a friend. Hence arose a strange situation. The rôle, for which Bernadotte was cast in the drama of his day, was that of Napoleon's rival and obstacle. How could the bosom friend of Napoleon's brothers and sisters play such a part with credit or consistency? He lived in an atmosphere, in which Napoleon was adored; and when the great man was far away, he sometimes joined in the family worship. When Napoleon returned, dominating the scene, and absorbing all glory and power, Bernadotte became the lion in his path. But, besides his natural caution and irresolution in civil affairs, he was held back by family influences, which were always at work to weaken his hostility, and to obtain for him forgiveness, reconcilement, and even rewards. As a result, Napoleon sometimes found that this lion in his path resembled less the "king of beasts" than Androcles' tame deliverer. There could be no nobility in such a rôle under such conditions.

But, if family ties restrained Bernadotte from resolutely resisting Napoleon, they *also* restrained Napoleon from proceeding to extremities against Desirée's rebellious husband. Bonaparte more than once declared that, on three separate occasions,[a] he

[a] He probably referred to the conspiracy of Rennes (1802), Bernadotte's absence from Auerstadt (1806), and the Wagram gasconade (1809).

would have had Bernadotte shot, if it had not been for Desirée. We need not take too seriously so highly coloured a figure of speech. But, from time to time, Desirée undoubtedly proved Bernadotte's mascot; and it is not improbable that, but for her, he might have shared Pichegru's fate, or Moreau's banishment, or the neglect which was meted out to other distinguished soldiers, who, like Jourdan and Brune, were not the *chiens fidèles* of the dispenser of all favours.

CHAPTER LVI

THE ARMY OF MAINZ — BERNADOTTE IN HESSE-DARMSTADT—HIS FRAME OF MIND TOWARDS BONAPARTE IN NOVEMBER 1798

NOVEMBER 1798–FEBRUARY 1799

An Interesting Letter

"Since the general [Bonaparte] has not been able to remain in his country to enjoy the glory of his many high achievements and the admiration of his fellow-citizens; since all the gifts, with which fortune and nature have endowed him, have failed to make him happy; since, in fine, in order to satisfy the aspirations of his energetic soul, made for great ends and projects, he has turned his steps to a land once bedewed with the blood of Antony and of the mighty Pompey, we must, my dear Joseph, not confine ourselves to barren wishes."—*Extract from letter from Bernadotte to Joseph Bonaparte, 26th November 1798.*

"Very brave, very prudent, very worthy of respect, very clement towards our country while it was occupied by his troops."—*Extract from address to Bernadotte from the Academy of Hesse, December 1798.*

"Do you take me for a Jew? I only act from humanity. Not a word more—hasten to Darmstadt, and relieve the anxiety of the Landgravine."—*Bernadotte's reply to the Landgrave of Hesse's offer of a domain, February 1799.*

Two months after Bernadotte's marriage he was appointed, on the 20th October, to command the left wing of the army of Mainz, and was stationed, at the end of November, at Giessen, a university town in Hesse-Darmstadt. There was a lull in the war-storm. The negotiations at Rastadt were giving the combatants time to take breath; and the Gascon general at Giessen occupied himself writing letters and conciliating the Hessians. His commander-in-chief

was General Jourdan, who had recovered the nerve and the reputation, which had been so severely shattered in the autumn and winter of 1796.

In a letter to General Jourdan, dated from Giessen, 28th November,[a] Bernadotte forwarded to his chief some information, which had reached him from friends in Vienna, with whom he kept up a correspondence since his ambassadorship in that city. The information was to the effect that Russia and England were urging the Austrian Government to re-declare war against France, and that the Viennese Cabinet was pleading, as an excuse for non-compliance, the pendency of the Rastadt conference, and the unpreparedness of the Austrian army for offensive operations.

Bernadotte wrote from Giessen another letter, dated 26th November, to his brother-in-law Joseph Bonaparte, which has a special interest, because it bears upon his frame of mind towards Napoleon, who was then in Egypt. It is to be inferred from this letter that Bernadotte entertained at this time no personal animosity towards Napoleon, who had taken the opportunity of writing a friendly and congratulatory message on the occasion of his marriage. Bernadotte had now become a close personal friend of Napoleon's brothers and sisters, and he lived in a circle, in which the absent general was regarded as a hero. Perhaps distance lent enchantment to his view. At all events, he was prepared to forget the rift which arose in November 1797, and his grievances over the Viennese Embassy. His permanent cause of quarrel with Napoleon was the latter's ambition for supreme power; and if Napoleon had been content to be the first general of the

[a] *Revue de la Révolution*, v. 88, 89.

Republic, he might not have found Bernadotte an obstacle in his path.

"GIESSEN, 6 *Brumaire*,
7th Année de la Republique
(*26th November* 1798).

"I hasten, my dear Joseph, to let you know that private letters, recently received from Constantinople by merchants at Frankfort, announce that all the Beys have joined your brother. . . .

"If it were necessary now to consider whether there should be an expedition to Egypt, my advice would be to think twice before embarking upon it. Perhaps I should be against it. . . . I explained my views on that subject to Treilhard at Rastadt. . . . But the Government would have it. . . . That being so, we must obey our destinies, or the caprice of certain individuals.

"Since the general has not been enabled to remain in this country to enjoy the glory of so many high achievements, and the admiration of his fellow-citizens; since all the gifts, with which fortune and nature have endowed him, have failed to make him happy; since, in fine, in order to satisfy the aspirations of his energetic soul, made for great ends and projects, he has turned his steps to a land once bedewed with the blood of Antony and the great Pompey, we must not, my dear Joseph, confine ourselves to mere barren wishes. We must devise means by which the army of the Republic may be made to triumph in Africa. To attain that object the Directory must be overwhelmed with demands. They have chosen to embark on this expedition, and they are bound to see it through. Their honour and the heavy responsibility, which will perhaps soon fall upon them, point out to them their imperative duty.

"Forty thousand Republicans, led by chiefs who are the honour and glory of the nation, extend to us their arms. . . . They count upon our constant perseverance. . . . But have they not grounds for fearing that they may be abandoned, like lost children, in a country where the necessaries of life cannot be obtained? Such an apprehension, even if an

unreal one, would be enough to discourage an army, which, although to-day it strikes terror into the crescent, may in an interval of four months become itself an object of compassion.

"To prevent such misfortune, the consequences of which would be fatal and disastrous for the Republic, you must avail yourself of the friendship which binds Barras to your family. Rewbell must be won over. The Minister of Marine must not be forgotten; and that man, whom a fatality has initiated in the great secrets of State, and whom a blind fortune maintains in office, must also help you.[a]

"It is manifest to the least clear-sighted that the army of Egypt, if it has to depend upon its own unaided resources, cannot support itself, in spite of the genius and indefatigable activity of its commander, the brilliancy of its generals, and the bravery of its soldiers. It must succumb in the end, unless the mother country comes to its aid. I propose that the King of Sardinia be ordered to send to the island of that name 3000 men, under the pretext of maintaining tranquillity and protecting the island from the Corsairs of Barbary; that the King of Spain be requested to place at our disposal 6000 men at the ports of Cartagena and Alicante with suitable transport; that a Cisalpine legion, a Roman legion, and a Polish legion be collected and embarked at Genoa, Leghorn, Ancona, Civita Vecchia, and be sent off about the 25th or 30th Nivose (*i.e.* 14th or 19th January 1799). If possible, some Swiss and Ligurians should be added. Some of these different expeditions, starting from different points, will reach their destination, even if they do not all succeed in doing so. The army will be encouraged, their enthusiasm will be tripled, while the Mussulman will be proportionately dismayed. Its natural timidity will resume its sway over the Divan. The effect of the arrival on the banks of the Nile of soldiers of so many different nations, to share the fortune of France, and to identify themselves with our success and our enterprise, will be incalculable.

"It would be indeed humiliating, if a defeat sustained by Bruix and Bonaparte forced our governors

[a] Talleyrand.

to have recourse to means unworthy of our national dignity and pride. They must give all their attention to the requirements of the war, if they wish to preserve the spirit of such an honourable and enduring peace, as their weak and halting diplomacy[a] is unable to procure. They will never obtain it, whatever sacrifices they make, unless they maintain powerful armies.

"If they adopt this course, more than one bourgeois at London and Paris will remember the language which the famous Hannibal addressed to the senate of Carthage after the battle of Cannæ.

"Why should not our Republic act as Rome did after the event, which plunged in mourning the capital of the world? And why should not we rise superior to the caprice of fortune?

"Good-bye, my dear brother-in-law. Excuse this scrawl, if you have had the patience to read so far as this. A thousand tender messages to Desirée. Do not forget to give my regards to Julie,[b] and to Christine.[c] Remember me to Lucien, Polette,[d] and Leclerc. I embrace you with affection."[e]

Bernadotte's suggestion for the relief of Egypt, by a shower of expeditions from the various nations of Europe, may appear to be somewhat fantastic. One thing, however, is quite clear. The writer's mind is, in regard to General Bonaparte, entirely friendly and appreciative.

Bernadotte's success in conciliating the Hessians is evidenced by the honours conferred upon him by the Universities of Giessen and of Heidelberg, and by

[a] "Halting" diplomacy conveys a covert allusion to Talleyrand's lameness.

[b] Madame Joseph Bonaparte.

[c] Madame Lucien Bonaparte (Lucien's first wife, Christine Boyer).

[d] Pauline Bonaparte, then Madame Leclerc, afterwards Princess Borghese.

[e] This letter is printed in the *Catalogue of the Morrison Collection of Autograph Letters*, 170–172.

the Academy of Hesse. The latter body elected him a member, and described him, in an official document, dated 18th December 1798, as :—

"Jean Baptiste Bernadotte, General of Division of the French Republic, very celebrated for his exploits, very brave, very prudent, very worthy of respect, very clement towards our country while it was occupied by his troops, very generous and liberal towards our Academy, very benevolent towards all those who cultivate the Muses, illustrious protector of Science and of Art."[a]

His popularity soon afterwards bore fruit in the shape of a treaty between Hesse-Darmstadt and France, under which the Hessians withdrew their troops, numbering about three thousand, from the service of Austria, and made peace with the French Republic. After the conclusion of peace, Professor Crome, the envoy of the Landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt, thanked Bernadotte for his clemency, and said: "General, my sovereign makes you the offer of a domain. Our treasury is too exhausted to give you a gift of money." "Do you take me for a Jew?" replied Bernadotte, "I only act from humanity. Not a word more—hasten to Darmstadt, and relieve the anxiety of the Landgravine."[a]

[a] Hans Kloeber, 109, 113; *L'Intermédiare des chercheurs et curieux*, vii. 614.

CHAPTER LVII

BERNADOTTE REFUSES THE COMMAND OF THE ARMY OF ITALY

FEBRUARY 1799

"He [General Bernadotte] feels bound to submit to the Government the resources, without which he has not the presumption to believe himself capable of achieving success."—*Conclusion of Bernadotte's report specifying the conditions on which he will alone accept the command of the army of Italy.*

IN February 1799 the Directory had to fill the post of general-in-chief of the army of Italy, vacated by the retirement of General Joubert from that command. Director Barras describes their difficulty in finding a suitable successor. The ranks of the young generals had been thinned by Hoche's death, and by the absence of Bonaparte and of Kléber in Egypt. Masséna was on active service; Moreau was ineligible on political grounds. He adds: "In the front line of the best we had retained was Bernadotte."[a]

For the vacant post Barras proposed Bernadotte, who, on the 25th January, had left the army of Mainz for Paris.[b] The other directors rejected the proposition—influenced, says Barras, "by prejudices bequeathed by Bonaparte and carefully nourished by Talleyrand." "But," he adds, "as the need of military talents, which all governments would like to ignore, but with which they cannot dispense when they have to carry on a war, soon brought them round to agreement with me, my colleagues authorised me to offer the command of the army of Italy to Bernadotte."

[a] Barras, iii. 311; (E.) iii. 392. [b] *Ney*, par Bonnal, 121.

What follows is related by Barras, who was representing the Executive Government in the matter. Accordingly, we cannot do better than follow, and, where necessary, quote his narrative.[a]

Bernadotte, in the first instance, inquired what forces would be placed at his disposal. Barras could not promise him any greater number than were at present in the field. Bernadotte said, "That will not suffice," and pointed out that it was a mistake to suppose that Bonaparte's great achievements, in the campaigns of Italy, had been accomplished with small means. He declared that Bonaparte always had at his disposal immense resources, among which were the notable reinforcements which he (Bernadotte) had himself conducted from the Rhine.

"Bonaparte," he said, "never ceased calling for more troops; and you, Citizen Director, never ceased granting them to him. The 20,000 men, whom I conducted from the army of Sambre and Meuse, amounted to something, although he enjoyed hearing them called 'Messieurs' by the citizen soldiers of Masséna and Augereau. I think they proved, at the Tagliamento and at Gradisca, that they had not to fall back upon 'the citizens' for carrying out their operations. Our troops are excellent. They are the best in Europe. They have all the qualities. One can go with them to heaven or to hell. But there is a certain numerical force, which cannot be altogether dispensed with in war, in the immense developments which occur nowadays, when one has to guard an extended line of territory, garrison fortified places, and, at the same time, advance to give battle. Rest assured, Citizen Director, that Bonaparte did not do something with nothing; and that, without being such an executioner of men as he is, there is a certain number of combatants requisite, nay, indispensable, when one has to meet warlike nations, who are always being reinforced, and have at their command a very deluge of population."

[a] Barras, iii. 311–315; (E.) iii. 393–396.

Barras tells us that Bernadotte's statement was delivered with great animation, and with a plentiful sprinkling of picturesque phrases. The director asked the general to put his views in writing, so that he might be able to submit them to his colleagues; and on the following day Bernadotte presented a minute containing his written observations, of which Barras says:—

"It was a document more remarkable for its logic and convincing eloquence than any that I have ever read in critical moments."[a]

Bernadotte, in his written observations, pointed out that the army of Italy consisted of 103,000 men, of which 50,000 were swallowed up in garrisons and fortresses, leaving 53,000 combatants, who would, by casualties and by necessary detachments, be further reduced, before the actual invasion of Austria could begin. The campaign would then have to be opened under very different conditions from those, under which the campaign of 1797 had been conducted by Bonaparte, who had the control of the Venetian fortresses, and was opposed to a discouraged and scattered enemy. The Austrians were now in possession of the Venetian fortresses, and had 120,000 men with which to resist an invasion. Nevertheless, he offered to accept the command, if supplied with 20,000 more men, or, in other words, with 73,000 combatants. His memorandum ends characteristically:—

"The general, admitting that the Directory cannot draw from the interior the 20,000 men . . ., asks authority to summon to his right 20,000 men from the army of Naples. That country will only be evacuated temporarily, and will be reoccupied when the army of Italy has succeeded in its object. General Bernadotte, flattered by the con-

[a] Barras, iii. 314; (E.) iii. 395.

fidence in him, which the Government has testified, has applied himself to the task of exhaustively scrutinising the plan of campaign which they propose to him to pursue. He must candidly admit to the Directory that, if he had not been so fully informed of the position of the French army in Italy, and of the obligations which have to be fulfilled, the seductive and persuasive eloquence of the Minister of War would have completely convinced him. But, while he has been compelled to admire the superior talents, which the Minister displayed in that discussion, he feels bound to submit to the Government the resources, without which he has not the presumption to believe himself capable of achieving success."[a]

Barras presented Bernadotte's report to his colleagues, who turned to General Schérer, the Minister of War, and asked him what he had to say. Schérer replied that there was much truth in Bernadotte's memorandum, but that a great deal of it was theoretical, and would have to stand the test of experience; that the army of Italy had all the troops that the Government could provide; and that, if led by a good general, that army could not fail once more to obtain striking successes.[a] Director Merlin turned to the Minister and said, "Would you undertake the command upon these conditions?" "Yes, Citizen Director," replied Schérer, "I could not refuse the burden which I wish to impose upon another." "Well, then why not yourself undertake the command of the army of Italy?" "Citizen Directors, my only duty is to obey," replied the Minister, who, on the spur of the moment, was appointed to be general-in-chief of the army of Italy. The campaign turned out very much as Bernadotte had predicted. Schérer tried to repeat the tactics of Bonaparte, without his genius and without his advantages; and in less than two months, on

[a] Lafosse, 168–175; *Le Spectateur Militaire*, 1re serie, vol. xlv. pp. 578 et seq.

5th April, sustained a crushing defeat at Magnano—by which France lost all its conquests in Italy.

Jomini makes the following comment on this campaign, which accords with Bernadotte's opinion, and with the condition which he laid down: "What different results France would have obtained, from the opening of that campaign, if, summoning the army of Naples, . . . they had hurled 80,000 combatants by Albaredo upon Kray's centre."[a] This approximates to what Bernadotte stipulated for, except that he asked for only 73,000 combatants.

Barras never forgot this incident. He subsequently returned to it and observed that the conditions, which Bernadotte laid down, were justified by events, and that his advice to the Government turned out to have been well-informed and sound.[b]

The date of the events, which are related in this chapter, is fixed by a letter, from Bernadotte to Schérer, of 25 Pluviôse, An. VII. (13th February 1799), from which the following is an extract:—

"GENERAL BERNADOTTE TO CITIZEN SCHÉRER, MINISTER OF WAR.

"I enclose, Citizen General, a copy of the notes, which I sent yesterday to Director Rewbell and to the President of the Directory. I beg of you to take their commands with reference to the observations which I have made. . . . I lay great stress, Citizen, upon not having a civil commissary in Italy. . . . If I were to command the army of Observation, I should not have so much objection; because, being nearer to you and to the Government, I could take instructions from you and from them. . . .—Friendship and respect, J. B. BERNADOTTE."[c]

This letter, which is in the author's possession, was evidently written after Bernadotte had laid down his conditions, and before they had been rejected.

[a] Jom. xi. 166. [b] Barras, iii. 385–388; (E.) 489. [c] App. Note (34E).

CHAPTER LVIII

THE ARMY OF OBSERVATION—A GASCON GENERAL-IN-CHIEF OF A PHANTOM ARMY

FEBRUARY–APRIL 1799

"So far as I am concerned, if you force me to scale your ramparts, I have the men and the means to enable me to do so. But tremendous will be the punishment for him, who constitutes himself the enemy of the French Republic. I shall not restrain the fury of my troops. Its full force will be directed against him."—*Bernadotte's summons to surrender Philippsburg, 1st March* 1799.

"General Bernadotte did everything that depended upon him to second me."—*Extract from General Jourdan's* Précis des opérations de 1799.

BERNADOTTE, having refused the Italian command, returned to the seat of war in Germany, where he was the designated chief of a new army, to which was given the name of the "Army of Observation." This appointment, which he took up in the course of February, placed him in a somewhat equivocal position. The rank of a general-in-chief was accorded to him, and also to Masséna, who commanded the army of Helvetia. But the armies of Observation and of Helvetia were placed under the orders of General Jourdan, who was the general-in-chief of a third army (sometimes called the "Army of the Danube") operating between the other two. It is evident that this arrangement was calculated to cause friction and misunderstanding.

The Minister of War wrote to the three generals uncandid and inconsistent letters.[a] To General Jourdan he wrote, on 8th February, asking him "not

[a] Gachot, 36 n.

to believe that the titles of generals-in-chief held by Masséna and Bernadotte exempt them from your authority in the matter of operations of war. The Directory recognises, as I do, the necessity for a unified command on the Rhine. Therefore, do not be alarmed at the word 'armies.' Look upon the two armies (*i.e.* of Observation and Helvetia) as two great divisions of your army. Masséna, on the right, will second you vigorously. Bernadotte will do the same on the left. Believe me, the Directory will suffer no disobedience to your order from the one or the other of them." At the same time the Minister told Masséna that he was absolutely independent, but that he must appear deferential towards Jourdan, so as to please the Directory.

Bernadotte made no difficulty about serving under Jourdan;[a] and Jourdan tells us, in his *Précis* of the campaign, that he only consented to run the risks of a divided command, when he learnt that he was to share them "avec un militaire éclairé, un vrai républicain, un ami sincère,—le Général Bernadotte."[b]

In February Bernadotte took up his duties, as the general-in-chief of the army of Observation, with head-quarters at Germersheim, near the fortress of Philippsburg on the Rhine. But the Directory failed to support him. The promised army of 48,000 men never actually existed. Small detachments reached him in driblets. It was in vain that he appealed, with all his usual vehemence, for the promised troops. He was left to carry out a formidable plan of campaign, with a wholly inadequate force.

Bernadotte, finding himself in the nominal command of a phantom army, fell back upon his Gascon resources. He made up for lack of battalions by

[a] Barras, iii. 325; (E.) iii. 410. [b] Jourdan's *Précis*, 63, 64.

1799.

After a contemporary portrait.

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a correlative superfluity of bluff. Crossing the Rhine at the beginning of March, he proceeded to lay siege to Philippsburg, which was defended by a formidable garrison under the Rhinegrave of Salm; and, having neither men, materials, nor siege equipment, he made up for the weakness of his bombardment by the vigour of his summons to surrender, the tone and language of which have been severely criticised.

One of his officers gives an explanation of the incident, which is probably the true one.[a] The French general found himself before Philippsburg, with instructions imposing upon him the obligation of taking the place, but without soldiers to storm the fortress, or siege artillery to bombard it. He was expecting reinforcements, and he launched this manifesto for the purpose of necessitating an exchange of official communications, and of thus gaining time and keeping up appearances. It was, however, taken seriously by the enemies of the French Republic. They recalled the *émeute*, which terminated Bernadotte's career as ambassador to Austria; and they seized upon the Philippsburg summons as another glaring indiscretion of the "man of Vienna with the little flag." As the document created a European sensation at the time of its issue, it deserves, for that, if for no other reason, to be rescued from oblivion.

"*12 Ventôse, year 7 of the French Republic (2nd March 1798).*

"BERNADOTTE, GENERAL-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMY OF OBSERVATION, TO THE GENERAL COMMANDING THE FORTRESS OF PHILIPPSBURG.

"GENERAL,—The Austrian Government has, in violation of the Treaty of Campo Formio, caused the fortress of Ulm to be occupied. That step compels me to place a garrison in the fortress which you command.

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 186–188.

It would be useless, General, for you to attempt to oppose me. . . . Your garrison is too weak to resist an escalade. . . . I must also inform you, General, that your garrison is discontented, that your officers are too wise and enlightened to shed their blood for the sake of the caprice and fancy of a few extravagant individuals, and that your soldiers are only awaiting the signal to give expression to their true wishes. The inhabitants, rather than see their houses devoured by flames, will also take their part. The artillery of Laudau, which is advancing to fire their town, will give them the excuse, for which they have for a long time been waiting, to force the commandant to surrender its keys. The terrible example, which General Mack has given to all men, who, like you, General, lead soldiers to fight against their will, ought to furnish you with materials for serious reflections. My army, without having its full strength, is strong enough to reduce your fortress. I hope that no obstinacy or resistance on your part will compel me to shed human blood, and to expose to desolation the innocent inhabitants of Philippsburg. . . . You hold in your hands, General, the lives of many men and the existence of the inhabitants of Philippsburg. You will be accountable for them not only to your contemporaries, but also to posterity, by which you will be judged. So far as I am concerned, if you force me to scale your ramparts, I have the men and the means to enable me to do so. But tremendous will be the punishment for him, who constitutes himself the enemy of the French Republic. I shall not restrain the fury of my troops. Its full force will be directed against him. I have the honour to salute you.

"BERNADOTTE."[a]

The Rhinegrave of Salm was not to be cowed by batteries of this description. Bernadotte's clemency in dealing with conquered places was so well known in Germany, that there was no danger of his threats being taken seriously by the inhabitants or by the garrison. They regarded it and treated it as a piece

[a] *Paris pendant 1799*, xxi. 356.

of transparent bravado. The Rhinegrave responded with a dignified refusal to surrender, and calmly awaited events. The European press condemned Bernadotte's summons as a sample of Revolutionary bad manners, and lauded the Rhinegrave to the skies as an heroic soldier and gentleman. Bernadotte, however, accomplished his object by gaining time and diverting attention from the weakness of his army.

Meanwhile, Ney, who was a general of brigade in the army of Observation, took possession of Mannheim, where he met with little or no resistance; and Bernadotte arrived at that place on 3rd March.

As there was no sign or prospect of the arrival of any of the promised reinforcements, Bernadotte proceeded to issue inflammatory proclamations from Mannheim, addressed to the people of Germany, which impelled the Austrian Government to retaliate by issuing counter-manifestoes.[a] This campaign of proclamation and counter-proclamation occupied the first half of March. The French commander, without men or materials, was in the position of a watchdog without teeth. He was making up for his inability to bite by the loudness and ferocity of his bark.

Bernadotte's instructions to Ney show the desperate straits to which he was reduced. He points out that "when one is weak, one is driven to be *rusé*."[b] He rests his hopes upon treachery and venality in the ranks of the enemy, and he is careful to warn the "bravest of the brave" not to commit his engagements to writing. Ney appears to have followed these instructions; for, in one of the publications of the day, the phrase "Verba volant" was applied to the professions and promises, in which Ney freely indulged during these operations.[c]

[a] *Moniteur*, 1st, 3rd, 5th, 10th, and 12th April 1799.

[b] *Ney*, par Bonnal, 133. [c] *Paris pendant 1799*, xxi. 268.

In the middle of March, Bernadotte was in Paris, protesting against the Government's failure to send him the promised troops. Before the end of March the Directory had come to the conclusion that it was useless to maintain these three spectral *corps d'armées* with high-sounding titles, suppressed the armies of Observation and of Helvetia, and converted them into wings of the army of the Danube, with Jourdan as commander-in-chief. This was a change, but only a change in name. The left wing of the army of the Danube was just as shadowy as the army of Observation had been. General Jourdan, after fighting a gallant but disastrous engagement at Stockach, was obliged to beat a retreat, which involved the retirement of Bernadotte's small force, now reduced to three regiments of infantry and five of cavalry. The two generals could no longer conceal their desperate situation, or tolerate the supineness of the Directory. The fragment of a corps, which Bernadotte commanded, was without pay or supplies, and it became impossible to preserve discipline or to prevent pillage. Napoleon said at St. Helena that it only existed on paper.[a] A general cannot creditably command a phantom army, or conduct a campaign with pen and ink, for an indefinite period. A time arrived, when the unaided resources of Gascony proved unequal to the task of invading an empire.

Jourdan, early in April, relinquished his command, having previously given Bernadotte leave of absence, on the ground of ill-health. The three armies were now unified under Masséna, to whom Bernadotte fired off this parting gasconade :—

"A hæmorrhage caused by the delicacy of my lungs has obliged me to allow myself a brief rest,

[a] *Corr. de N.* xxx. 263.

and to take advantage of a leave granted by General Jourdan. When my health has improved, I shall hasten to join my post, and either to die a glorious death with my comrades-in-arms, or else with them to conquer the enemies of the Republic.

"Greeting and esteem. "J. BERNADOTTE."[a]

Bernadotte, who retired on sick leave[b] to a country-house at Simmern belonging to the father-in-law of his aide-de-camp, Maison, felt deeply aggrieved at the failure of the Government to support him. Jourdan, his commander-in-chief, and Barras, the director, have testified that he was not to blame for the shortcomings of the army of Observation.

General Jourdan has written a *Précis* of the campaign of 1799. The following passage seems to be conclusive upon the question of Bernadotte's behaviour. He writes:—

"General Bernadotte did everything that depended upon him to second me. What succour could he have given me? He had to conduct the siege of Philippsburg. He took possession of Mannheim. He urged forward as rapidly as possible military fieldworks at several points on the Rhine. He occupied himself in provisioning Mainz and Ehrenbreitstein, and in arming and equipping the conscripts. He pressed the Minister and the Directory with vigour for the reinforcements, both of infantry and cavalry, which had been promised to him for so long a time. It is unnecessary to repeat that his requests and pressure were useless. The troops never reached the Rhine, until after we had both relinquished our commands."[c]

Barras, who compares Bernadotte in his retirement to "Achilles sulking in his tent," admits that he "acted promptly and skilfully under the circum-

[a] *Masséna*, par Koch, 464. [b] *Ney*, par Bonnal, 140.

[c] Jourdan's *Précis*, 110.

stances"; and that the Government, instead of the promised troops, only sent him a few untrained recruits. He adds: "It required all Bernadotte's talent to make something of them, and yet, with this phantom of an army, he succeeded in temporarily commanding respect."[a]

A campaign conducted under such conditions could not enhance Bernadotte's reputation. Meanwhile, Bonaparte's star was acquiring fresh brilliancy; and both the sympathy and the curiosity of the public were aroused by the movements of the commander of the army of Egypt, who could boast that he "rose in the morning in Africa, and lay down at night in Asia."[b]

Bernadotte's letters to Ney during this period are of an intimate and cordial character—one of them, which is in the author's possession, is printed in the Appendix;[c] another, written during Bernadotte's sick leave, on 5th May, contains the following interesting passage:—

"I advise you not to oppose the wishes of the Directory by persisting in a refusal to accept the rank of General of Division. Question yourself, my dear Ney, and answer in all good faith whether the call of your conscience (*le cri de votre conscience*) does not bid you lay aside a modesty which becomes misplaced and even dangerous, when it is carried to excess. . . . You see that in my retreat . . . I write paternally, but you will understand everything that comes from a man, who is attached to you by bonds of the strongest friendship, and the most unbounded esteem."[d]

This is the third of Bernadotte's letters in which "*le cri de conscience*" is pointed out as a guide of conduct for himself or others.[e]

[a] Barras, iii. 324, 337.
[b] Chateaubriand, *Mémoires d'outre Tombe*, i. 70.
[c] App. Note (24F). [d] *Ney*, par Bonnal, 154.
[e] See pages 48 and 266 *supra*.

CHAPTER LIX

BERNADOTTE AND THE 30TH PRAIRIAL: 13TH–30TH PRAIRIAL, AN VII.

JUNE 1–18, 1799

"Pour éviter un César, on chercha un augure."—SOREL, v. 426, 427 (*referring to the election of Sieyès to be a director*).

"A corporal's guard is enough to dispose of the lawyers."—*Bernadotte's gasconade before the 30th Prairial.*

WHILE Bernadotte was absent from France a group of electors purported to elect him to the Council of 500 for his native department of Basses-Pyrénées. His election was part of a movement, to which the name of "Scissions" was given. Bernadotte does not appear to have been consulted about the matter by his supporters, and the election was annulled. The incident has no importance, and did not affect his career.[a]

After six weeks' rest, Bernadotte returned to Paris, at the end of May.[b] In the meantime two public events had occurred which were of grave significance.

On the 28th April the three French representatives at the Congress of Rastadt were attacked by Austrian hussars as they were leaving that place. Two of them were murdered; and the third was left for dead. This event still further embittered the relations between Austria and France, and increased the difficulties of the French Government.[c]

In Paris a momentous change had taken place in the personnel of the Directory. The retiring director, Rewbell, was on the 20th May replaced by Sieyès, the

[a] Pingaud, 31.
[b] *Gazette de France*, 30th May 1799.
[c] Sorel, v. 398.

French ambassador at Berlin,[a] who, alone among the non-military statesmen of the day, retained a mysterious prestige. "Pour éviter un César," writes Sorel, "on chercha un augure."[b]

Sieyès, *ci-devant* abbé and vicar-general, had won a foremost place among the founders of the Revolution by the publication in 1789 of his famous brochure, *What is the Third Estate?* Having thus established a certain renown, he managed, by speaking seldom and to the point, and by observing timely absences and well-selected periods of self-effacement, to survive the Terror, without losing either his head or his popularity. He enjoyed the reputation of being a clever coiner of Republican phrases, and a skilful spinner of ideal constitutions. He had always decried the Directorial constitution, and had refused election as a director in 1795. He now became a director, resolved to undermine and destroy the Directory; and in less than six months he helped to carry out his resolve. His first step in that direction was to co-operate with the Legislature in getting rid of three out of his four colleagues.

Sieyès' four colleagues were Barras, Larevellière-Lépeaux, Merlin, and Treilhard. Barras was the only one of this quartette, who retained any dregs of influence and popularity. The others were friendless and discredited lawyers, who had played a game of see-saw between the two parties in the State, first striking one and then the other, with the result that both Moderates and Jacobins were now united in demanding their removal.

Sieyès and Barras quickly made up their minds to throw their unpopular colleagues to the wolves. Treilhard was got rid of by a belated objection being

[a] Sorel, v. 398. [b] *Ib.* v. 426, 427.

raised to the validity of his election as director, after he had held office for a year. It remained to deal with Larevellière-Lépeaux and Merlin. The Constitution provided no means of removing them. The only way of doing so was to expel them forcibly by a *coup d'état*, with the co-operation of the army and of a general appointed *ad hoc*.

On this occasion Bernadotte showed the caution, or irresolution, which so often overtook him in a political crisis. He went to the directors with Generals Jourdan and Joubert to represent the needs of the army. Sieyès sounded his visitors upon the subject of a constitutional change. Jourdan and Bernadotte gave evasive replies, while Joubert offered himself to Sieyès.[a]

A similar incident occurred, when the time for action approached. The situation was being discussed by a group of generals. Joubert, who had already carried out civil revolutions in Holland and in Italy, exclaimed, "A lot of time is being wasted in talk. I shall put an end to it all, whenever it is wished, with twenty grenadiers!" Bernadotte, who was not to be outdone at a game of bluff, remarked, "Twenty grenadiers! It is too many—a corporal's guard is enough to dispose of the lawyers."

This remark was reported to Barras, who was looking out for a general to superintend the expulsion of his three colleagues. He proposed to take Bernadotte at his word: "Well, then, General," he said, "we shall give you the command of the 17th division; you shall have no violent operation to perform. All that is required is to preserve order and prevent excesses on the part of the Republicans against the recalcitrants." Bernadotte was taken aback. Barras

[a] Jourdan, *Mémoires inédits Le Carnet*, vii. 161, 163.

describes him as showing embarrassment, and irresolution, and an obvious desire to extricate himself from the position in which his gasconade had placed him. After a few minutes' silence, which contrasted with his usual readiness in reply, he said, "Citizen Director, General Joubert came to Paris before me; he has taken, in this connection, an initiative, which I might perhaps be showing but little delicacy in disputing. I beg you to permit me to go to him myself, and to lay your offer before him, as behoves a comrade."

Before seeking Joubert, Bernadotte confided to his aides-de-camp, Colonel Maison and Captain Maurin, the offer which had been made to him and his disinclination to accept it. They urged him to take the opportunity. "Accept the honour which seeks thee. Do not go after Joubert, just to give him precedence over thyself. Thou sayest and believest that thou art without ambition; thou wouldst prove it all the better by doing, on the day that is approaching, what shouldst be done for the common weal, and by doing nothing in thine own interest."[a]

Something, which never deserted him, kept him aloof from all the *coups d'état* of his time. Was it "must not" whispered by conscience? Or, was it "do not" dictated by habits of discipline, a natural caution, and a consciousness of his inexperience? Or, was it "I dare not" waiting upon "I would"? Or, was it a blend of "must not" and "do not" and "dare not"? At all events, upon this as on other occasions, he declined a pressing invitation from high quarters to join in an assault upon the civil authority. Joubert, who had no such scruples, accepted the opportunity without hesitation, and assumed the command of all the troops in the capital.

[a] Barras, iii. 361, 362; (E.) iii. 458, 459.

General Joubert.
Killed at the Battle of Novi, August 15, 1799.
After the portrait by Bouchot.

To face page 370.

The *journée* of the 30th Prairial was a bloodless one. General Joubert's only duty was to overawe the unruly elements of the Parisian populace. Not a shot had to be fired; and no necessity arose for any action on the part of the troops. The two Legislative Councils, on the motion of Lucien Bonaparte, took the grave step of declaring their intention to sit in permanence. Backed by the moral force of parliamentary pressure, Barras bullied Larevellière-Lépeaux and Merlin into a reluctant resignation. Such was the *coup d'état* of the 30th Prairial.[a]

Larevellière-Lépeaux retired to an obscurity, from which he never afterwards emerged. Treilhard and Merlin, who were eminent lawyers, returned to public employment in later years. The three vacant places in the Directory were filled by the election of Gohier, a judge highly and justly esteemed but with no following and little force of character; Moulins, an obscure general; and Roger Ducos, a creature of Sieyès. Roger Ducos was one of a group of politicians, who, throughout the Revolutionary era, always drifted with the tide. It was said of them that they voted imperturbably on the winning side in every political crisis from the death of Louis XVI. to the fall of Napoleon. Gohier and General Moulins were loyal to the existing Constitution. Sieyès was bent upon overthrowing it. Barras for the time being held the balance.[b]

The new Directory were now faced with the task of forming a Ministry; and Bernadotte found himself suddenly called to a new sphere of duty.

[a] Vandal, i. 85–88; *L'Histoire générale*, viii. 394–396; *Cambridge Modern History*, 669–670.

[b] Sorel, v. 428.

PART IX

BERNADOTTE, MINISTER OF WAR

JULY 2–SEPTEMBER 14, 1799

"Bernadotte [as Minister of War] was indefatigable with tongue and pen. His speeches, proclamations, and circulars constitute a curious monument of Revolutionary and Gascon eloquence, a strange mixture of military ardour and incoherent pathos. He displayed remarkable intelligence and enthusiasm and a prodigious power of work. Rising at three o'clock every morning, he left his small house in the Rue Cisalpine, and was first to arrive at the Ministry. He attended to everything, exerted himself to repair the service thoroughly, to push forward the enlistment of recruits, to refresh the military stores, to reorganise the armies, to cheer the drooping spirits of officers and men. He struggled with restless activity against the chaos of difficulties which faced him."—ALBERT VANDAL, *L'Avénement de Bonaparte*, chap. ii.–i.[a]

[a] Cf. Sorel, v. 306.

PART IX

BERNADOTTE, MINISTER OF WAR

JULY 2–SEPTEMBER 14, 1799

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CHAPTER LX

BERNADOTTE, MINISTER OF WAR—HIS TIRELESS ENERGY AND HIS FIERY GASCONADES

JULY 2–SEPTEMBER 14, 1799

"The army had need of a Minister capable of restoring its moral force and animating it with fresh enthusiasm. The General of Division, Bernadotte, appeared to be singularly fitted for that great and noble duty."—DIRECTOR GOHIER.

"We want a man esteemed for his achievements and for his character. . . . I propose Bernadotte as Minister of War."—DIRECTOR BARRAS.

"Un Gascon par excellence . . . il est du pays d'Henri IV. et un menteur comme le bon roi."—DIRECTEUR SIEYÈS.

IN July 1799, the Republic was confronted with the impendency of war in Italy, in Switzerland, and in Holland. The *coup d'état* of Prairial had smoothed matters by bringing the legislature into harmony with the Executive; and the Legislative Councils hastened to raise fresh armies, and to testify their confidence in the newly constituted Directory, by decreeing a general conscription and a forced loan of a hundred millions. But the decrees were in themselves of little force or value. So feeble was the authority of the Councils, so universal was the decay of public spirit, and so widespread was the wane of military enthusiasm, that the Directors were compelled to recognise that the conscripts would not come, and that the millions would not be forthcoming, unless they could find some popular and capable public man to fill the office of Minister of War.

Carnot, if he had not been an outlaw and an exile, would have been the man best fitted for the emergency.

Failing him, the choice of the Directory fell upon Bernadotte. Two directors, Gohier and Barras, have recorded their reasons. Gohier writes that "in the deplorable position in which France was placed the army had need of a Minister capable of restoring its moral force and animating it with fresh enthusiasm. General Bernadotte appeared to be singularly fitted for that great and noble duty."[a] He adds that the appointment had been settled, before Joseph and Lucien Bonaparte came to recommend their brother-in-law. Barras tells us that "the armies of the Republic were disheartened and dejected. The generals were discontented, and the soldiers worn out and depressed. What was wanted was a man, who possessed the confidence of the army, and a reputation founded upon character and achievement. Such a man was Bernadotte, who had passed through every rank from the lowest to the highest, and had shown himself an upright and enlightened administrator as well as an able organiser."[b]

The appointment was opposed by Sieyès, who objected to a soldier, and urged that what was wanted was a civilian administrator. Besides, he took exception to Bernadotte personally, as a man who had been "a Moderate" and had only recently become a patriot. He summed him up as: "Un Gascon par excellence . . . il est du pays d'Henri IV. et un menteur comme le bon roi."[b] Barras argued that a good general was bound to be a good administrator; for, in order to make an army win a victory, the first thing to be done was to feed, clothe, and arm it. He also referred to the wise advice, which the Gascon general had given when refusing the command of the army of Italy in the

[a] Gohier, i. 40, 41. [b] Barras, iii. 385–388; (E.) iii. 488–490.

previous February,—advice which events had justified. Sieyès remained unconvinced, but a majority of the Directory carried the proposal, and Bernadotte was appointed Minister of War on 2nd July.

The appointment of a distinguished and energetic soldier to a post, which had been usually filled by obscure civilians, acted like a tonic upon the officers and men of the armies. In the correspondence of the time are to be found letters of soldiers expressing satisfaction at the appointment of so brave and popular a commander.[a] Among the generals there were differences of opinion. For example, Joubert and Jourdan were pleased at the selection of Bernadotte for the post; while Masséna and Marbot (the elder) were doubtful as to his suitability.[b]

Bernadotte's Ministry lasted only from 2nd July to 14th September 1799. Yet, a large-sized volume might be filled with all that he said and wrote and did during that brief period, and with the flood of proclamations, circulars, and manifestoes, by which he endeavoured, with a large measure of success, to reanimate the corpse of military enthusiasm. If any reader has the curiosity to glance through the columns of the *Moniteur*, or to search, in the British Museum or elsewhere, the files, from July to September 1799, of such newspapers as *La Gazette de France*, or *La Clef du Cabinet*, they will find upwards of forty addresses, proclamations, circulars, and official letters, published over Bernadotte's name, during these ten strenuous weeks. Hardly a day passed without some stirring appeal to patriotism, or some confident message of encouragement.

[a] Pierre Girardon, 45.

[b] Gohier, i. 54; *Masséna*, par Koch, iii. 339–342; Marbot, i. 36.

In a normal condition of public affairs, these fierce and fiery gasconades would have been utterly out of place. But the maladies of the moment were the decay of public spirit and the cooling of patriotic ardour. In the treatment of such diseases Bernadotte was a specialist; and that was why he had been called to the sick-room of the State. To the task of reviving the ebbing activities of the armies of the Republic, the Gascon Minister devoted the natural gifts, with the help of which he had so often, to quote Kléber's phrase, " electrised " the troops under his command in Belgium, in Germany, and in Italy.

Bernadotte's addresses and proclamations are of varying merit. They have the appearance of having been rapidly penned or dictated, with no more care, than the Minister would have given to some impromptu speech to a mutinous mob, or to a regiment on the field of battle. Some of them are crude and commonplace. But they contain passages marked by earnestness and sincerity, where he idealises the blessings of liberty, under a free constitution, a belief in which still captivated his imagination. There is a rough melody in the sentences, in which he recalls the pure spirit of patriotism, that had animated his old comrades in the army of Sambre andMeuse. It is the music of Memory playing an old tune on the heart. There are also some flashes of fiery originality, which caught the fancy, and fixed the attention of his contemporaries.

How the Minister said and did and wrote so much in so short a time would be a mystery, if we did not know that he turned night into day, and worked at such high pressure, as to strain to the uttermost even his exuberant energy and remarkable strength of body and mind.

Barras, who was in constant communication with him, gives the following account of the daily life and labours of the Minister. The passage carries a double weight of authority, because the editor of Barras' memoirs, Rousselin de St. Albin, was secretary of the War Department under Bernadotte:[a]—

"Bernadotte, who lived in the Rue Cisalpine, at the extremity of the Faubourg de Roule, did not take up his residence at the Ministry, but continued to reside at his home, which was a *maisonnette* that hardly cost 20,000 francs. But he was attached to it, both because he had purchased it with his military savings . . . and because it was there that his wife had just given birth to a son, the only one they ever had, who is now" (*i.e.* at the date of the writing of the memoirs) "Crown Prince and heir presumptive to the throne of Sweden. Continuing to sleep at the Rue Cisalpine, Bernadotte rose every morning at 3 a.m., and reached the Ministry of War at 4 a.m., with his secretary, for whom he called on his way at his residence in the Faubourg St. Honoré. His aides-de-camp, who were in Paris at the time, were utilised for administrative work. He had given orders, on entering upon his Ministry, that nothing should remain for more than twenty-four hours undisposed of, or, at all events, unconsidered and unanswered, and had infused such energy into the Department that this order, which appeared at first hardly possible of execution, was rigorously carried out, and everything was up-to-date. In this way, as he said in his proclamations, he had to reorganise and create everything, to raise a hundred battalions of a thousand men each, forty thousand cavalry, etc. After having given to his work, and to the reports which he made daily to the Directory, fifteen or sixteen hours, he returned at about 7 p.m. to dine at home at the Rue Cisalpine, with his secretaries and his aides-de-camp on duty. His wife was recovering from her confinement, and when the Minister returned he always found here, on pretence of inquiring after Madame

[a] Barras, iii. 417; (E.) 529, 530. Vandal, i. 97.

Bernadotte's health, the brothers Bonaparte,[a] or, at all events, Joseph and his wife."

Let us look over the Minister's shoulder, as he sits at his desk, wielding his pen with feverish activity. Immediately upon taking office, he issued, in quick succession, a series of passionate proclamations, of which we may take, as a sample, the following circular addressed to the Generals of Division :—

"*Le* 20 *Messidor* (*8th July*).

"TO THE GENERALS OF DIVISION.

"The Directory has just confided to me the Department of War. If, at a moment of national danger, it were allowable to consult my own preferences, you will be right in believing that I should have refused the Ministry, and have already rejoined my comrades at the front. But in view of the ruinous condition of every branch of military administration, I have felt that the very difficulty of the enterprise imposed upon me the obligation to accept. My vigils are entirely devoted to the task of relieving the necessities of my brothers in arms." (He then appeals to the generals to revive the old spirit of unity and enthusiasm which won the first victories of the Republic.) . . . "I have seen those glorious days when the generals did their duty six times over on the field of battle, and the promotion, which was conferred upon us, was the reward of those extraordinary exertions. It is by the same virtues and the same energy that liberty is to be reconquered. To win success, you have only to recall your past achievements. Resume once more the courageous attitude of former days. Awaken lofty sentiments. At your voice there will issue from the ranks those children of Liberty, who are bound to be her preservers. Spare no pains in seeking them out. Lose no time in pointing them out to me. They shall be promptly promoted. They are the men who will conquer Europe. . . .

"Friendship and confidence.

"The Minister of War, BERNADOTTE."[b]

[a] Joseph and Lucien. [b] *Moniteur*, 9th July 1799; Gohier, i. 371.

The writer of this circular retained, in all its pristine freshness, the enthusiasm, which had stirred him ever since the Revolution lifted him out of the obscure ranks of the old Royalist army. He had not —perhaps he never—realised the truth of the judgment passed upon the theories of the Revolution by a philosophic historian,—" toujours le même contraste entre le nom et les choses, les mêmes phrases pour recouvrir les mêmes méfaits."[a] He had not shared the general disillusionment, which had dogged the downward path of the Directory. His dream of liberty had turned out to be no " shadowy lie." But, to many of his readers this enthusiasm for liberty must have seemed to be an anachronism, and must have struck them as unseasonable and out of date.

Another notable encouragement was conveyed to the army, when Bernadotte reinstated several generals who had been disgraced by his predecessor. Vandamme,[b] who was under the cloud of a pending prosecution, was reinstated, and was given a division in the army of Holland. Championnet, one of Bernadotte's old comrades in the army of Sambre and Meuse, had been arrested at Naples and had been sent for trial before a court martial. Bernadotte had already offered to undertake the defence of his old comrade at his trial;[c] and one of his first official acts was to order Championnet's release, to appoint him to the command of the army of the Alps, and to vindicate him by the following letter, which was published as a sort of proclamation :—

" PARIS, *le* 20 *Messidor* (*8th July*).

" TO GENERAL CHAMPIONNET.

" The Directory, by its order of the present month, appoints you commander-in-chief of the army of the

[a] Taine, 607. [b] *Vandamme*, i. 515. [c] *Championnet*, 226.

Alps. Thirty thousand brave men await you, impatient to resume the offensive under your orders. A fortnight ago you were in chains. The 30th Prairial has delivered you. To-day public opinion condemns your persecutors. Your cause has become, so to speak, the cause of the Nation. Could you wish for a happier lot? There are some who find in the accidents of the Revolution a pretext for calumniating the Republic. For men like you the suffering of injustice only intensifies the love of country. . . . Go, my friend, cover the traces of your chains with new laurels. Efface those traces . . . or rather preserve those marks of honour. It is useful to liberty to keep continually before our eyes the crimes of despotism. I embrace you as I love you.

"BERNADOTTE."[a]

However severely these effusions may be judged by a modern critic, who peruses them in cold blood, it is easy, even in cold blood, to understand how well calculated they were, in July 1799, to inspirit the dejected armies of the Republic.

[a] *Moniteur*, 10th July 1799; Gohier, i. 370.

CHAPTER LXI

THE MINISTER OF WAR AND THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER—BERNADOTTE AND ROBERT LINDET[a]

JULY–AUGUST 1799

"La chronique contemporaine ne le montre tirant l'épée que pour menacer le ministre des finances, Robert Lindet, qui se défend en ouvrant silencieusement devant lui les caisses de l'état et en les lui montrant complètement vides."—*Bernadotte, Napoleon, et les Bourbons*, par Léonce Pingaud, p. 34 (referring to the scene between Bernadotte and Lindet).

"Draw on me or on the National Treasury to the amount of two millions at 20, 30, and 40 days from this date. . . ."—*Extract from letter addressed by Bernadotte, Minister of War, to General Joubert, general-in-chief of the army of Italy, 3rd August 1799.*

ONE of the first and most urgent of the questions, which faced Bernadotte in his new sphere of duty, was "that cursed want of pence which vexeth public men," and, of all public men, vexeth none more severely than a Minister of War. The armies were clamouring for food, clothes, materials, and arrears of pay. Their situation was perilous everywhere, and not least in Italy, where the Austrians were supported by a Russian army under the famous Marshal Suvarov. Bernadotte did not hesitate to promise, in his proclamations to the generals and to the armies, that the necessary funds would be forthcoming, and that he would not rest until that happy result had been accomplished. Then followed one of those incidents, which must be of common occurrence in all Cabinets,—namely, an onslaught by the chief of a great spending department upon his colleague the

[a] "*La Revolution française*," *Revue historique*, October 1897, 290–317.

guardian of the public purse. Rarely, perhaps, has it happened that a more vigorous assault has had to be made upon an emptier exchequer. The credit of the Republic was at its lowest ebb, and of ready money there was none.

The new Minister of Finance was Robert Lindet,[a] one of the most interesting of the lesser lights of the Revolution. Robert Lindet had been Carnot's colleague and understudy in the organisation of the first victories of the Republic. He has been described by Thiers as "beloved by the patriots and respected by all parties." He had been a member of the terrible Committee of Public Safety; but, like Carnot, had been as free from its bloodstains as a member of that Committee was capable of being. After the fall of Robespierre, he ran the gauntlet of parliamentary denunciation and of a criminal prosecution. Having been acquitted, after a prolonged trial, he married happily, and retired to a restful seclusion, which the Directory, in July 1799, cut short by peremptorily calling upon him to take up the thankless office of Chancellor of an empty exchequer. His appointment seems to have been due to the influence of Gohier, who was an honest man, and liked honest men. Lindet raised objections, which were quickly cleared away. He was appointed on 23rd July; and one of his first experiences, after his installation, was to make the acquaintance of his colleague, the Minister of War, who was impatiently awaiting his arrival. Both Ministers were earnest, upright, patriotic men. But before they came to an understanding, they acted a little scene of comedy which has passed into history.

Robert Lindet had no sooner entered upon his new office, than Bernadotte repaired to the Ministry

[a] Aulard, *Les Orateurs de la Révolution*, ii. 536–539.

of Finance, for the purpose of demanding from his colleague the necessary funds for placing the army in an effective state. A dramatic interview ensued. Bernadotte depicted the miserable condition of the armies of the Republic in wild and gloomy colours, and demanded instant reparation from the guardian of the national purse. Lindet painted, in no less dismal hues, a companion picture of the lamentable embarrassments of the national finances, and politely pointed out the impossibility of compliance with Bernadotte's impassioned demands. Bernadotte then drew his sword and, in a fiery gasconade, threatened to transfix somebody—either Lindet, or, as is more probable, himself—if the necessary funds could not be immediately provided.[a]

There was nothing to be got by addressing Lindet, as if he were a military mutiny. The Finance Minister summoned his heads of departments, and soon convinced Bernadotte of the emptiness of the National Treasury. The problem was how to fill it, or how to supply its deficiencies. The bankers were approached,[b] and the Ministers were so far successful, that we find the following passage in a letter, of the 3rd August (16th Thermidor), addressed by Bernadotte to General Joubert, commander-in-chief of the army of Italy:—

"Draw on me or on the National Treasury to the amount of two millions at 20, 30, and 40 days from this date. . . . You may give positive assurances to the bankers of Genoa, and to all others who shall provide you with these funds, that they will be fully satisfied here by the National Treasury. I shall soon let you know what I have done to obtain the means which I am giving you.

"BERNADOTTE."[c]

[a] Cf. Pingaud, 34. [b] See Chapter LXVII. *infra*.

[c] Redon de Belleville, ii. 92.

The bankers of Genoa, and the others, who provided the funds, were not as quickly satisfied as they might have desired. Bernadotte remained in office for barely six weeks after writing this letter. We find that, nearly two years afterwards, so late as February and June 1801, Italian creditors were pressing the National Treasury for payment of two orders of 10,000 francs each, payable to them for money advanced for the army of Italy in pursuance of Bernadotte's letter of 3rd August 1799; and the Treasury were holding out confident hopes of soon being able to meet these obligations.[a] It is safe to assume that they were soon afterwards met with interest, and that, like Robert Lindet, they all escaped without a scratch.

Enough has been said to show that Bernadotte was not slow or unsuccessful in exerting himself to keep his promise to send moneys to the army of Italy. He had already redeemed his promise to send materials. We find in the Paris newspapers, within a fortnight after his appointment, the announcement that the Minister of War had sent 100,000 muskets to the army of Italy. To this announcement an editorial note was added: "Courage, Bernadotte, the reward of thy activity will be the triumph of the Republican armies, peace, and the grateful affection of all Frenchmen!"[b]

[a] Redon de Belleville, ii. 120, 140.

[b] *La Gazette de France* (28th Mess.), 16th July 1799.

CHAPTER LXII

The Minister of War and the Army of Italy—Bernadotte, Joubert, and Championnet

JULY–AUGUST 1799

"Joubert has perished in your midst, in the flower of his age. You heard his dying words. You have sworn on his tomb to avenge him. Your tears will not have been shed in vain."—*Extract from Bernadotte's address to the army of Italy after Joubert's death at Novi, August 1799.*

Foremost among the generals, with whom the Minister of War was brought into direct relation, was Barthélemy Joubert, the general-in-chief of the army of Italy. If ever the pathetic words, "What shadows we are, what shadows we pursue," fitted an episode of real life, that episode was the brief dream of happiness, glory, and power, which mocked young Joubert in the summer of 1799.

At this point of time General Joubert was in his thirty-first year. His career had been like that of Bernadotte. He had run away from school at the age of fifteen, had enlisted as a volunteer, and had reached in a few years the rank of general. In the Italian campaign of 1796 he so conducted himself that Bonaparte, then and afterwards, bestowed greater praise upon him than upon Masséna or any other general of his army, and said to the Directory, when starting for Egypt, "I leave you Joubert."

We have seen how Bernadotte rejected Barras' invitation to become the military "sword" behind the *coup d'état* of the 30th Prairial, and how

Joubert eagerly seized the reversion of that opportunity.[a] Sieyès was looking everywhere for a general to help him in reconstituting on a new basis the Government of France,—in fact, to accomplish what Bonaparte did six months afterwards. He now made up his mind to select Joubert to play that part; but Joubert's military reputation was not ripe for so great an experiment.[b] It was necessary to encircle his head with an aureole. It was with this object that Joubert was given the command-in-chief of the army of Italy.[c] Bernadotte was not in the secret of the Sieyès-Joubert enterprise. He would not knowingly have aided it. He was not prepared himself to embark, or to help anyone else to embark, in any such adventure.

Young Joubert was on the point of being married to Mademoiselle de Montholon, stepdaughter of a prominent diplomat, M. de Sémonville. He lingered too long in Paris over his wedding and brief honeymoon; and, on his arrival at the head-quarters of his army, where he received loyal advice and help from General Moreau, found himself placed in a position of great perplexity. The surrender of some fortresses in North Italy by French garrisons had just released the besiegers, who were hurrying up to reinforce the enemy. In a few weeks Joubert would himself receive important reinforcements. What was he to do? He decided not to wait, but to give battle at once against superior numbers. This was the battle of Novi, fought on 15th August. In leading a gallant charge, Joubert fell, mortally wounded, and, after murmuring his young bride's name, and exclaiming, "Forward, my men! Forward!" to his troops, he expired on the field. Thus perished

[a] Chapter LIX., pages 369–371 *supra*.
[b] Sorel, v. 429, 430. [c] Vandal, i. 113.

Sieyès' deep-laid design, and the baseless fabric of young Joubert's brief dream of glory and of power.

In the moment of national dejection, which succeeded the defeat of Novi and the death of Joubert, when Paris was draped in mourning,[a] and the Directory was plunged in the depths of despondency, the Gascon Minister blazed forth with a vibrant address, which appeared in the Paris newspapers of 30th August. It was much praised and admired, and served to turn the tide of public feeling, and to extract encouragement out of misfortune and defeat.

"TO THE ARMY OF ITALY.

"For three years Joubert remained unknown and unrecognised in the obscure ranks of the army; and now his death has riveted the respectful attention of Europe. What is the secret of so great a reputation? Soldiers of the fatherland, this is another of Liberty's miracles. She raises to the skies her generous defenders. . . . He has perished in your midst, in the flower of his age. As he fell from his horse, he exclaimed to you with his last breath, 'Forward, my comrades! Forward!' You heard his dying words. You have sworn on his tomb to avenge him. Your tears will not have been shed in vain. . . . Rally round that eternal principle of victory—discipline! It will bring back to you the success which is only delayed. Numerous reinforcements representing every arm of service are on their way to support you. Let the old soldiers give to the young conscripts the example of order and of duty. . . . Brave friends. The stock of brave generals is not exhausted. When we lived under kings, it was possible for men to say that nature requires repose after having produced a great man. But I see among you more than one Joubert, more than one Bonaparte. Liberty has transformed nature.[b] BERNADOTTE."

It has been said that the concluding passage was praised by Bonaparte, when he read it afterwards.

[a] Vandal, i. 76. [b] *Moniteur*, 30th August 1799.

Perhaps the complimentary reference to himself, coming from such a quarter, gratified him. It shows that Bernadotte, hardly ten weeks before the Revolution of Brumaire, was proclaiming to the world his high appreciation of Bonaparte as the first General of the Republic; and it confirms M. Dry's judgment that "ce que Bernadotte va detester en Bonaparte, ce n'est pas l'homme mais le maître."[a]

In consequence of Joubert's death, the army of Italy was united to that of the Alps, and the command of the two armies was conferred upon General Championnet. The Minister embodied this appointment in an impassioned proclamation, in which he reminded his old comrade of the spirit which had animated the army of Sambre and Meuse:—

"You were one of the brave soldiers of that glorious army of Sambre and Meuse, in which we saw so many thousands of men presenting the picture of a single family, with no rivalry save emulation in the service of the commonweal. Honesty, Sobriety, and Discipline, austere and vigorous—these were the powerful forces which won for that army its high renown. They will again be your guides to Victory.

"The Minister of War, BERNADOTTE."[b]

But the Minister's messages to the army of Italy were not always messages of encouragement. There were others which were sent with a sterner purpose. The surrender of the fortresses in North Italy proved disastrous to France, because the besieging forces were thus set free to take the field. Bernadotte ordered the commandants to be brought before a court martial in a letter which concluded as follows:—

". . . It is, undoubtedly, to be regretted that signal examples should be necessary in order to en-

[a] Dry, ii. 458. [b] *Moniteur*, 30th August 1799; Gohier, i. 375.

GENERAL CHAMPIONNET.
From a contemporary portrait.

GENERAL MOREAU.
From the portrait by Guérin.

Friends of Bernadotte.

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force military laws. No commandant can have been ignorant of the fact that those laws forbid capitulating, before the town has stood an assault. Even if the laws had not so decreed, should not a Frenchman and a Republican find such a prohibition in his heart? Do not courage and honour anticipate the law's decrees?"[a]

The fall of the fortresses reached a culminating point, when Mantua was surrendered by General Foissac-Latour, who was never afterwards forgiven. Thereupon the Minister wrote to the general-in-chief in Italy:—

"The newspapers, Citizen General, published, some days back, the rumour of the surrender of Mantua. Such news is too extraordinary to find credence from those who know French valour. If, contrary to all probability, that surrender has taken place, whatever be the conditions, it must have been the result of treason. I order you, in the name of the Republic and of its interests and glory, to bring General Foissac-Latour and all his staff without delay before a court martial.

"Health and brotherhood.

"BERNADOTTE."[b]

[a] Barras, iv. 6, 7; (E.) iv. 6. [b] *Moniteur*, 22nd August 1799.

CHAPTER LXIII

THE MINISTER OF WAR AND THE ARMY IN SWITZERLAND—BERNADOTTE AND MASSÉNA

AUGUST–SEPTEMBER 1799

"As a friend and a brother in arms it is my duty to remind you, and as a Minister I invite you to consider, that the orders of the Directory do not admit of delay."—*Extract from despatches from Bernadotte to Masséna, 5th September 1799.*

"Although brave and skilful in the field of battle he (Bernadotte) did not possess the powerful breadth of vision and wealth of combinations demanded by a vast chess-board."—*Mémoires de Masséna*, par Koch.

IN the last chapter we described the relation of the Minister of War with the army of Italy. Let us now turn our attention to the army, which was operating in Switzerland. When Bernadotte was Minister of War, Masséna was the general in command of the army "of the Danube," also called "of Helvetia," which occupied lines extending from Bâle to the Alps.[a] Masséna had, in the first Italian campaign, earned the popular title of the "spoiled child of victory"; and his right to bear it was never challenged, until, in after years, he met Wellington in Spain. In 1799 he was at the height of his reputation.

There was no love lost between Masséna and Bernadotte. We have seen, in a former chapter,[b] that when they met, for the first time, in the Italian campaign of 1797, their respective divisions became involved in violent controversies with each other, as a result of which good blood was shed, and bad

[a] *Masséna en Suisse*, par Hennequin, 448–462.

[b] Chapter XXXVIII., pages 219 et seq.

blood remained. The two generals were not to blame; but their personal relations were necessarily affected. Their tastes and characters were antipathetic. Bernadotte was energetic, with gracious and popular manners, inclined to be comparatively just and upright in his dealings with conquered places, and with a decided disposition to try his luck in the field of politics as well as of war. Masséna was indolent and morose, fond of money and good living, and laid himself open from time to time to charges of rapacity. He always kept aloof from politics, saying to his comrades, "I have no taste for that kind of business, arrange it among yourselves." The only influence, that ever brought them together, was that of Madame Récamier, who, in the days of the Consulate, admitted them both to her intimate circle. Masséna was the greater soldier of the two. He lacked the imagination which is necessary to make a great strategist. But he was a resourceful tactician. His energies might flag in the course of a campaign, but they were stimulated by the approach of the enemy, and he became inspired, when the time for action came.

Bernadotte was so much occupied with the task of reorganising and reanimating the armies of the Republic, that he did not turn his attention to the strategy of the Swiss campaign, until the middle of August, when he made a report to the Directory sketching a general plan of operations for the army of the Danube.[a] His proposals, which were adopted by the Directory, included two flank movements on a large scale. One of these movements, which involved the occupation of the Grisons and of St. Gothard on Masséna's right or southern flank, was carried out with

[a] Jomini, xii. 355.

gallantry and success by General Lecourbe. But the other branches of Bernadotte's plan of campaign caused acute differences between Masséna and the Government. Masséna resented a proposal to create a diversion on his left flank by sending 18,000 men to the Rhine from his main army; and he resisted the pressure, which was put upon him by the Government, through the Minister, to give battle at once.

The verdict, both of military critics such as Jomini, and of historians such as Thiers, seems to be that Masséna was right in objecting to having his main army enfeebled by the subtraction of so large a detachment. On the other hand, Masséna has been blamed by the same writers for his delay; and his subsequent success has been said to have been accomplished in spite of that delay rather than in consequence of it.[a] This is not the place to discuss these strategical problems, save in so far as they illustrate the relations of Bernadotte and Masséna, upon which some light is thrown by the Gascon Minister's despatches of the 17th and 26th August and 5th September.

On 17th August Bernadotte sent an urgent despatch to Masséna giving him the alternative of giving battle at once, or of sending the detachment to the Rhine. He wrote :—

"You must not delay an instant in carrying out the wish of the Directory. The first and last virtue of a soldier is obedience. I cannot too emphatically repeat that, if you have not the intention of fighting the battle, which France expects and the Directory desires, you are to order, on receipt of this letter, the departure of the 18,000 men."[b]

Masséna, indignant at this proposal to weaken his

[a] Jomini, xii. 52–55; Thiers, v. 381–383. [b] Jomini, xii. 361.

main army, at once tendered his resignation, hinting at ill-health and requesting the Government to appoint a successor. The Government were not in a position to press their views; and we find Bernadotte writing on the 26th August:—

"You will have perceived, by my letter of yesterday, that the sending of troops to the Rhine, which you were to have carried out, has been postponed. . . . I know well enough, Citizen General, your devotion to the Republic, to believe that you have forgotten the state of your health, and that you have no other wish than to justify the hope of the fatherland in this important crisis."[a]

In a letter of 5th September the Minister again pressed Masséna to take the field. The "spoiled child of victory" cannot have been gratified at the following passages in Bernadotte's despatch:—

"Do not prolong, Citizen General, the national suspense. The eyes of the Republic are turned towards you. They are impatient to see the new trophies which await the noble army of the Danube. . . . The Directory have informed me of your letter, in which you speak of a successor. They think, as I do, Citizen General, that you can have no successor, at this crisis, other than yourself; that your glory bids you not to postpone the hour of victory; and that the interests of liberty stand in need of your devoted services. The moment to fight and to conquer has arrived. . . . As a friend and a brother in arms it is my duty to remind you, as a Minister I invite you to consider, that the orders of the Directory do not admit of delay (*sont pressants*)."[a]

It is not surprising to find that Masséna's aide-de-camp, who wrote his biography, deals somewhat severely with Bernadotte's Ministry, and says of the Minister's strategy that "although brave and skilful in the field of battle he (Bernadotte) did not possess

[a] Jomini, xii. 365–367.

the powerful breadth of vision and wealth of combinations demanded by a vast chess-board."[a]

Masséna's friends accused Bernadotte of intriguing against a rival. The suggestion was as unworthy and absurd, as was Sarrazin's suspicion that Masséna's delay was due to personal jealousy of Bernadotte.[b] Both Masséna and Bernadotte were actuated by a sense of duty. We know from the memoirs of Barras and of Marbot that, when the directors went so far as to propose to remove Masséna from his command, Bernadotte, acting apparently upon the advice and at the suggestion of the elder Marbot, persuaded them to suspend his recall.[c] Bernadotte also helped Masséna by carrying out his idea of creating a diversion on his left flank. Not being able to get the 18,000 men from Masséna's main army, he improvised an emergency force; gave to it the high-sounding title of the army of the Rhine; and blazoned abroad the project of a serious invasion of Germany. So well did he succeed in the game of bluff that the Archduke Charles of Austria was called away from Switzerland with 15,000 men to repel the invasion, and, before he could get back to the theatre of war in Switzerland, Masséna was able to win the battle of Zurich.[d] In this way Bernadotte blew a gust from Gascony into the sails of Masséna's conquering ship.[e]

[a] *Masséna*, par Koch, iii. 297–299.
[b] Sarrazin, *Guerre de 24 ans*, 149.
[c] Barras, iii. 471; Marbot, i. 34.
[d] Sarrans, 32, 33; Lafosse, 192, 193. [e] Jomini, xii. 55.

CHAPTER LXIV

THE MINISTER OF WAR AND THE ARMY OF HOLLAND—BERNADOTTE AND BRUNE

JULY–SEPTEMBER 1799

"It is to him (Bernadotte) that we owe the prompt help which was sent to Holland, nay, more, all the triumphs which the Republic has gained over its enemies."—*Extract from letter from General Boudet to General Vandamme, 30th October 1799.*

"You are a man, a general, a Republican. You have proved that you are worthy of those three great titles."—*Extract from letter from General Vandamme to Bernadotte, September 1799.*

WHILE Bernadotte's efforts at the Ministry of War gave offence to Masséna, they received a more grateful acknowledgment from the army of Holland, of which General Brune was the general-in-chief. Bernadotte and Brune had never come into collision; and the Minister does not appear to have imposed upon Brune any strategical directions, but to have limited his energies to finding and forwarding the requisite men and materials.

The proclamation, which Bernadotte addressed to General Brune, is an excellent sample of his circulars to the individual generals-in-chief.

"TO GENERAL BRUNE, GENERAL-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMY OF HOLLAND.

"Victory, faithless for a time, cannot delay much longer revisiting the banners of the Republic. . . . I have been keenly sensible of your position. I have painted it in its true colours. I have pointed out to the Directory that the soldiers' subsistence has been withdrawn and wasted, and that instead of clothes, they have been given squalid rags. I have pointed out how deeply in arrears has been their pay,

how the cavalry has been neglected, the artillery abandoned, the hospitals left derelict, how, in a word, every branch of the service has become disorganised. . . . You can announce that speedy results will ensue. . . . The pay will be forwarded. The cavalry will be remounted. The artillery will be strengthened and set in motion. The subsistence of the soldiers will be assured. Sufficient funds will be provided to support the war until it is able to support itself. . . . Tell the army that they will be no longer the prey of famine and nakedness. . . . Generals and soldiers, you have come to the end of your sufferings, but not of your courage. The harvest time is at hand. A few more exertions, and you will give peace to the world. If your destinies are glorious, are they not also sweet, when crowned by such results."[a]

Barras describes how the promises, which were proclaimed in this manifesto, were carried out. He tells us that Bernadotte, when attending the Directory, at the Luxembourg Palace, as Minister of War, suddenly rose from his seat, walked up to a map, which hung upon the wall, and delivered an impassioned speech to the five assembled "kings" of France. After referring to the situation in Italy and in Switzerland, he devoted his peroration to the requirements of the army in Holland:—

"See, Citizen Directors, what is going on at the other extremity of the Rhine. The English have landed in Holland, and General Brune is clamouring for reinforcements. You know my actual resources. What have I at my disposal? Nevertheless, they must be found, because, above all things, Holland must be saved. The consequences of its loss will be too deplorable. We must sacrifice everything for that supreme purpose. We shall save Holland—I swear it to you. As yet, I have only been able to send Brune fair promises. I have made promises to him, and I shall keep them. I am ransacking my reserves in every imaginable quarter. All that I can find, I cause

[a] Lafosse, i. 186, 187, 193; Sarrans, i. 29.

to go, or rather to fly down the Rhine by express boats. I shall invent means—I shall create forces. . . . Holland must be saved."

Barras says that Bernadotte carried his audience with him, and that Sieyès himself exclaimed: "General Bernadotte's reasoning is unanswerable! His words are golden. Holland must be saved."[a]

Sieyès required further pressure, before he was induced to comply with all the Minister's requirements. General Sarrazin, who was in charge of the department of the War Office dealing with the movement of troops, was sent by Bernadotte late at night to the Luxembourg Palace to obtain authority for the despatch of reinforcements for Holland. Sieyès was president, and had retired to rest. His servants refused to disturb their master, but his private secretary, recognising the pressing nature of the business, conducted Sarrazin to a remote apartment on the fifth storey, where he knocked several times at the wainscoted partition. A secret door opened in the wainscoting, and disclosed Sieyès occupying a cell, in which there was only room for a small bed. Sarrazin could not help laughing at the spectacle of one of the five governors of France sleeping in such a place; but the required authority was obtained; and the reinforcements were sped to Holland.[b]

There is undeniable evidence that Bernadotte's Ministry was highly appreciated by the army of Holland. Brune's victories at Bergen (19th September) and at Castricum (6th October) were won after the Minister's retirement; but they were rendered possible by the promptitude and energy with which Berna-

[a] Barras, iii. 467–470; (E.) 591–596.

[b] Sarrazin, *Mémoires*, 118, 119; *Guerres civiles*, 419; *Phil.* ii. 192, 193.

dotte, to use his own words, caused supplies and reinforcements "to go, or rather to fly" to Brune's assistance. The opinion of the army of Holland is expressed in two letters of Generals Boudet and Vandamme, two of Brune's best divisional commanders, foemen worthy of the steel of Abercromby and Dundas, to whom they were opposed.

General Boudet, who was sent by Brune to Paris with the treaty of peace, which concluded the campaign, wrote to his comrade Vandamme: "It is to him (Bernadotte) that we owe the prompt help which was sent to Holland, nay, more, all the triumphs which the Republic has gained over its enemies."[a] Vandamme himself wrote to Bernadotte from Holland:—

"... You are a man, a general, and a Republican. You have proved that you are worthy of those three great titles."[a]

[a] *Vandamme*, ii. 20, 21, 46.

CHAPTER LXV

BERNADOTTE, FOUCHÉ, AND THE JACOBIN CLUB

JULY–SEPTEMBER 1799

"Des hommes fort étrangers aux excès de 1793 se rapprochaient des Jacobins en présence des dangers de la patrie." —MARTIN, *Histoire de France*, iii. 43–45.

ON the 9th July 1799, a few days after Bernadotte's appointment to the Ministry of War, the following announcement appeared in the columns of the *Moniteur* :—

" The day before yesterday (*i.e.* 7th July) there was established in the Riding Hall (le Manège), attached to the Palace of the Council of Ancients, a society which occupies itself with political questions."[a]

This bald and indefinite statement covered the reincarnation of the Jacobin Club, under the name of " The Society of the Friends of Equality and Liberty." The majority of orderly people shuddered at the revival of the grim memories, with which the name " Jacobin " was associated. The club was unable to find a suitable rendezvous, until the weakness of the authorities of the Council of Ancients admitted them to the very precincts, in which the Constituent and Legislative assemblies, and for a time the Convention itself, had held their sittings. Its admission to this historic meeting-place gave to the new society a wide advertisement; and it came to be known as the Club of the Riding Hall (Club du Manège). These neo-Jacobins were strengthened by the countenance

[a] *Moniteur*, 9th July 1799.

extended to them by three well-known generals—Jourdan, Augereau, and Marbot, the latter the Commandant of Paris. These generals had no sympathy with Jacobinism, of which, in 1793 and 1794, they had narrowly escaped being victims. But they feared a Royalist reaction, and deplored the decay of military enthusiasm and prestige. They saw in the club a Republican stronghold and a means of resuscitating some of the old driving force, by which the frontiers of France had been defended and her battles had been won.

Whether Bernadotte was enrolled as a member, or ever entered its portals, is not very material. He was regarded by the Government, by the club itself, and by the public, as one of them; and he did not conceal his belief in the usefulness of an institution, which he looked upon as a Republican fortress. The following appears to have been one of the few occasions, upon which, as Minister of War, he gave any official encouragement to the club. On the 19th July the club orators complained that the officials at the War Office insulted the poor soldiers of the Republic, who came to the department for help or information. A few days afterwards a deputation from the club embodied their complaints in an address which they presented to "Bernadotte, Minister of War, Brother and Friend."[a]

Bernadotte responded by the issue of a circular which was not in itself objectionable:—

"BERNADOTTE TO THE HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS IN THE MINISTRY OF WAR.

"Men who are deserving of trust complain that the defenders of their country have been badly received at the War Office. Please at once find out who is responsible for such unworthy conduct, and

[a] *Moniteur*, 19th, 21st, 22nd, and 23rd July 1799.

inform me of the result of your inquiries. Is not the lot of the brave men who have been wounded in defence of their country already bad enough? They are compelled to seek, and they have merit to receive, the pity of the nation. But, if they have been refused it, and if they have been turned away from the place, which ought to offer them refuge and help, what shall be their consolation? What poor encouragement does such treatment give to those who risk their lives in fighting our battles! With men of honour respect for misfortune is a sentiment before it is a duty. In the case of comrades-in-arms it is an imperative duty. For my part I cannot retain as colleagues men, who are capable of such disregard of duty and humanity. The Republic will not extend its favours to those, who show themselves so utterly devoid of natural good feeling.

"BERNADOTTE."[a]

This cautious circular, and the granting of a petition recommended by the club,[b] appear to have been almost the only official steps which Bernadotte is reported to have taken to meet its demands.

Meanwhile, the club attained such unenviable notoriety that it was ejected by the Council of Ancients from the Riding Hall, and was forced to find a new and incongruous home in the vacant Church of St. Thomas Aquinas, in the Rue du Bac. Its numbers rapidly increased, and at the beginning of August reached 3000.

In view of this formidable awakening of Jacobin energy and organisation, the Directory,—upon the principle of "setting a thief to catch a thief,"—recalled to Paris, Fouché, their ambassador at the Hague, and appointed him Minister of Police. His mode of dealing with the Jacobin Club was cunning and quick. He began by striking a severe blow at the Moderates; and, having thus established his character

[a] *Moniteur*, 26th July 1799. [b] *Ib.* 27th July 1799.

as an unrelenting anti-Royalist, he turned his attention to the Jacobin Club in the Rue du Bac.

The first step towards breaking up the Jacobins was to get rid of General Marbot, the Commandant of Paris, who was their formidable ally, and to appoint in his place General Lefèbvre, in whom both Barras and Sieyès had reliance.

It was not possible to get rid of Bernadotte at such short notice, but Fouché subsequently claimed to have disarmed him in another way. Ten years afterwards, Fouché told the story to Count Philippe de Ségur during a saunter in the forest of Fontainebleau. His version of the incident ran as follows :—

"I sent for Bernadotte, and said to him: 'Idiot! where are you going to, and what do you want to do? It would have been all right in 1793, when there was everything to gain by unmaking and remaking. But, what we wanted then, we possess to-day. And as we have got what we wanted, and should only lose by going on, why do so?' He had nothing to answer to this, and yet he persisted. Then I added: 'Do as you please, but just remember this: that after to-morrow, when I shall have something to say to your club, if I find you at the head of it, your own shall tumble off your shoulders. I give you my word of honour, and I shall keep it.' This argument brought him to a decision."[a]

There is no reason to doubt that Count Philippe de Ségur has faithfully reported this remarkable statement of Fouché's. But we may be forgiven, if we suspect that Fouché slightly coloured the tone and substance of his allocution to Bernadotte. In the first place, Bernadotte, although a supporter of, and supported by, the Jacobin Club, did not resort there, and was not likely to be found at its head. In the second place, he was not a person to be easily bluffed. Bluff

[a] Ségur, iii. 407; Vandal, i. 194; *Fouché*, par Madelin, i. 251.

was a game at which the Gascon was a past master. That the Minister of War was brought to his senses by a threat of decapitation by the Minister of Police presents a situation, which does not seem to fit the two men who constituted it. It is more probable that Fouché advised his colleague Bernadotte to "keep his head" in a less serious and more conventional sense.

This appears to have been the first occasion upon which Bernadotte and Fouché were brought into personal relations. Who could have foreseen that a time would come when the family of the Minister of Police were to find a home as subjects of the Minister of War? But so it turned out; and the descendants of Fouché reside to-day in Sweden under the sovereignty of a descendant of Bernadotte.

Madame de Staël was, at this period, living in the Rue de Bac, not far from the meeting-place of the Jacobin Club. Both she and her friend, Benjamin Constant, came in for some rough handling from the orators of the club.[a] This did not, however, disturb her relations with Bernadotte. Writing of this period, she observed that, among the French generals, "one only, General Bernadotte, united, as the sequel has proved, the qualities of statesman and of a distinguished soldier. But he was then wholly devoted to the Republican party, which would no more approve of the subversion of the Republic, than the Royalists approved of the subversion of the throne."[b]

Bernadotte's association with the Jacobins has, in other quarters, been exaggerated and misrepresented. The truth appears to be that he associated himself with the Jacobins at the same time, and for the same reasons, as his old chief, General Jourdan.

[a] D'Abrantès, *Salons*, ii. 415.

[b] *Considerations on the French Revolution*, ii. 231.

Their attitude is referred to by the historian Martin in a passage, which is placed at the head of this chapter. They allied themselves with the Jacobins, because they appeared to be the only uncompromising Republicans. Bernadotte owed everything to the Republic, and was grateful to her. "The iron" of the *ancien régime* had "entered into his soul." He revelled in the freedom of opportunity, which the Republic had bestowed upon himself, and, as it seemed to him, on others. Liberty and equality were concepts, which, though they may have been out of date and out of fashion, still fired his imagination, coloured his outlook, and dominated his will.

CHAPTER LXVI

THE TEMPTATIONS OF A MINISTER OF WAR IN 1799 —BERNADOTTE REJECTS OVERTURES FROM ROYALISTS, JACOBINS, AND BONAPARTISTS

JULY–SEPTEMBER 1799

"The force of a temptation is not from without, but within." —LORD MORLEY.

"For seven years France has been a Republic, and, as in duty bound, I have taken the oath to obey its laws. My heart repels falsehood, and is devoted to the maintenance of the Constitution and glory of my country."—*Bernadotte's reply to the Royalist overtures.*

"Having been consulted by me on behalf of my friends, he (Bernadotte) declared that he was ready to take his place in our ranks, and to use his influence over the troops, but that, before doing anything, he would have to give up his portfolio, not wishing to abuse the confidence of the Directory for the purpose of overthrowing it."—*General Jourdan's account of Bernadotte's reply to the Jacobin overtures.*

"Your brother (*i.e.* Napoleon) has no right to quit the army. He knows the military laws, and I do not think he will expose himself to punishment under them. He is too well aware of the consequences of such a proceeding."—*Bernadotte's reply to Joseph Bonaparte's overtures.*

BERNADOTTE, during his Ministry of War, was approached and tempted with the bait of rich rewards by all the parties in the State.

Shortly after his appointment, Chiappe, an ex-Conventional of character and independence, who, on the occasion of the trial of the King, had the courage to declare that he would not "as a legislator assume the functions of judgment and condemnation," asked Bernadotte for an interview upon a subject which, he said, affected the public weal; and Berna-

dotte received him at the, for him, late hour of 5 a.m. the following morning.

Chiappe referred to the sad condition of France, and to the unstable position of the Republic. He said that a Royalist movement had been organised and would infallibly soon take shape in the return of the King. He added that the Duc d'Enghien, as lieutenant-general of the royal army, was in Paris, and that he (Chiappe) was authorised to inform Bernadotte of the state of affairs, and to add that the Prince was ready to accept such conditions as Bernadotte might make. It is said that the title of Constable of France was mentioned. In plain language, Bernadotte was invited to play the part of General Monk and to bring back the Bourbons.[a]

This communication placed Bernadotte in a perilous position. A Minister of the Republic, he became the trusted recipient of treasonable confidences; and was made aware of the presence in France of the outlawed Duc d'Enghien, which was a crime punishable with death. It is doubtful whether the Duke was really in Paris. Be that as it may, the situation in which the Minister was placed was one which might puzzle a casuist and embarrass any man of courage and of honour. Bernadotte dealt with it in his own rhetorical way, which had something about it, that was daring, dexterous, and *chevaleresque*. His reply was as follows :—

"The Duc d'Enghien will have no reason to repent the esteem he has exhibited for me. But how could he suppose that the loyalty of character, which he attributes to me, and to which he trusts, could allow me to listen to his proposals? It speaks to me a different language, and tells me that, as a Minister of the French Republic, I can have no relations with

[a] Sarrans, i. 36.

Royalists, except to oppose them. . . . For seven years France has been a Republic, and, as in duty bound, I have taken the oath to obey its laws. My heart repels falsehood, and is devoted to the maintenance of the Constitution and glory of my country. . . . That was my rule of conduct under the old Monarchical Government; that will always be my rule of conduct under the Republican regime. Take back this answer to him who sent you, and say that it is sincere and unalterable. . . . Add that for three days I shall keep the secret which you have communicated to me. That will enable him to cross the frontier. But on the morning of the fourth day, I shall inform the Directory of all that has taken place. In the meantime, as this secret might reach the Directory through some other channel, I shall watch the departure of couriers and telegraphic despatches, and protect the escape of the Prince. But remember that to-day is the first of the three days that I give him. Bestir yourself in the matter, and recollect that the least indiscretion may be fatal to yourself."[a]

From the Jacobin side Bernadotte was approached by a deputation, headed by General Jourdan, who waited on the Minister for the purpose of communicating their suspicions of Barras and Sieyès, inviting him to co-operate in emancipating the Republic from the influence of the suspected directors, and offering him the reward of high place.

We have both Bernadotte's and Jourdan's account of this incident. According to Bernadotte,[b] he stopped the discussion when he saw that it was approaching a perilous point, asked for proofs, which were, of course, not forthcoming, declined to associate himself, while a Minister, with any illegal or unconstitutional action, and delivered a speech which concluded in these terms: "No, citizens, I cannot agree to what you propose to me. It is not by a

[a] Lafosse, i. 202–206. [b] *Note historique.*

succession of violent shocks that the Republic will be consolidated. The blood of a million Frenchmen has cemented this system of Government. I shall not lend myself to anything which tends to its destruction." He then promised to observe secrecy on condition that his visitors abandoned their design.

General Jourdan twice refers to the matter. In one place he says that Bernadotte declared that his conscience would not permit him to employ, against the constituted authorities of the State, powers which he held from them, but that, whenever he should leave the Ministry, he would return to his political friends, associate himself as a plain citizen with their hardiest enterprises, and take his place in their fighting ranks.[a] In another place Jourdan writes :—

"I ought to relate, in reference to this subject, a characteristic trait of Bernadotte, which shows his loyalty of character. Having been consulted by me on behalf of my friends, he declared that he was ready to take his place in our ranks, and to use his influence over the troops, but that, before doing anything, he would have to give up his portfolio, not wishing to abuse the confidence of the Directory for the purpose of overthrowing it."[b]

There remained a third quarter from which the Minister of War was tempted. Sieyès sounded him upon the subject of recalling General Bonaparte from Egypt, but was met by the question, "Would not that amount to offering him a dictatorship?" Joseph Bonaparte then approached him, and began by remarking that Barras had, on several occasions, expressed his regret that Napoleon was not in France. "But," added Joseph, "he may arrive any day." A look of such lively astonishment crossed Berna-

[a] Jourdan, *Notice sur le 18e Brumaire.*

[b] Ib. *Mém. inédits Le Carnet,* vii. 161–163.

dotte's face, that Joseph, afraid that he had shown his hand too openly, hastened to add: "I am merely hazarding a guess. But such a thing may become probable or even be realised. As he has conquered Egypt, his work is done, and nothing remains for him to do out there." Bernadotte was not prepared to accept this view of the effect of the Egyptian campaign. He denied that Egypt had been conquered. "Besides," he added, "your brother has no right to quit the army. He knows the military laws, and I do not think he will expose himself to punishment under them. He is too well aware of the consequences of such a proceeding."[a]

Joseph and Lucien Bonaparte now apprehended that their brother-in-law, Bernadotte, would be an obstacle, and, if in possession of the Ministry of War, a very formidable obstacle, to any unconstitutional enterprise. They communicated their fears to Sieyès, who, since the death of General Joubert, had begun to think of General Bonaparte as "the sword," by which his dream of a new Constitution was to be realised. Joseph was an easy-going man, but Lucien and Sieyès were ambitious, and vainly imagined that Napoleon would be content to be the military instrument of a revolution, of which they were to reap a substantial share of the political benefits. They did not foresee that Bonaparte would quickly absorb all the power of the State. Bernadotte, with a keener insight, perceived that, within the radius of Napoleon's ambit, there would be no room for any other star of the first magnitude.

To a student of Bernadotte's life there is nothing incredible in this chapter of dramatic interviews and high-flown speeches. Benjamin Constant, who met

[a] *Note historique*; Lafosse, 208; Pingaud, 37.

him frequently, on intimate terms, in the circle of Madame de Staël, has given a description of his eloquent conversation. When a subject interested him, he became an impassioned orator, giving rein to a vivid imagination and a rich vocabulary, holding his listeners' attention by dramatic gestures, a not unpleasing Béarnais "brogue," and a liberal sprinkling of "Entendez-vous?" "Dieu vivant!" and other Gascon phrases and terms of expression. Madelin calls him "le Béarnais aux beaux gestes"; and it has been truly said of him that he was "péroreur par tempérament, grandiloquent sans répit."[a]

Temptations have been said to come for men to "meet and master them" and "so be pedestaled in triumph." But there was no pedestal of triumph reserved for the Minister of War, who resisted temptation in 1799. There was a *coup d'état* in the air. Nearly every influential politician was conspiring for a *coup* of one sort or another. There was no use for a Minister of War, who was not prepared to be a conspirator, or a creature of conspirators. Bernadotte had rejected these rôles; and his days as Minister of War were numbered.

[a] Madelin, *Le Révolution*, 548; *Annales des Sciences Politiques* (July 1799), 525–527.

CHAPTER LXVII

BERNADOTTE AND SIEYÈS—SIEYÈS RESOLVES TO GET RID OF BERNADOTTE

AUGUST–SEPTEMBER 1799

"We are no longer of any account. Nobody takes any notice of us. It is the Minister of War who constitutes the Government."—*Sieyès speaking of Bernadotte, September 1799.*

"'Feez et cortez' (False and courteous)."—*Ib.*

"It has been made clear to me that you are all ice, when you ought to be all fire."—*Bernadotte to Sieyès, September 1799.*

TAINE says that Sieyès, in his search for a "sword," to help him in a *coup d'état*, "thought of" several generals, and, amongst others, of Bernadotte.[a] If the ex-abbé thought of the Gascon, he soon realised that the "sword," which he was looking for, was not in that scabbard. Sieyès had opposed the choice of a soldier for the Ministry of War; and, as time went on, the Minister's proceedings made him more and more dissatisfied.[b] He soon began to take umbrage at Bernadotte's energy and growing popularity, which received a striking exemplification, when 600 veterans proceeded to the Ministry of War and offered their services to the Minister.[c]

Among the activities, which excited Sieyès' apprehension, was the Minister's success in stimulating the national conscription, and in sending the conscripts to the frontiers fired with military ardour. Public spirit had fallen so low that the call for conscripts

[a] Taine, 628. [b] *Lucien Bonaparte*, par Jung, i. 241.
[c] Sarrazin, *Guerres civiles*, 422.

was met with widespread evasion and desertion; and the young men, who responded to the call, lacked the zeal and élan, that had thrilled the volunteers in 1792. In this branch of his work the Minister was thoroughly at home; and, addressing them as a soldier, who had himself risen from the ranks, he succeeded in striking the imagination, and in rousing the enthusiasm, of the recruits.

The following is an example of his addresses to conscripts, when sending them to the front:—

"YOUNG CONSCRIPTS,—The moment approaches when you are to muster. The law summons you to the standards. A few days ago I reminded your chiefs of their duties. To-day I come to speak to you of yours. A soldier, whom the Revolution has drawn from the obscure ranks of the army, is able to trace for his young comrades the path, which he has pursued. If order is necessary in social life, the necessity is more rigorous in military life. The military career has its pains and fatigues. But it has pleasures which surpass them. If upon you falls the duty of securing the triumph of Liberty, you are the first who are invited to enjoy its advantages. . . . The soldier of liberty takes up arms, only to defend his rights. The knowledge that this is so is the incentive to great actions; and Liberty is their lever. To this creative inspiration we owe all the illustrious men, who are at this moment the glory of the Republic. The Coalition trembles at their irresistible ascendancy. They know that there are among you soldiers such as Bonaparte, Hoche, Joubert, Championnet, and many others their worthy rivals. . . . I have laid bare the secret of your strength. . . . Think of the mightiness of France in the days of her slavery. How mighty shall she be now that she has become free! . . .

"The Minister of War, BERNADOTTE."[a]

On 1st September he held a review of conscripts at Courbevoye, to whom he said:[a]—

[a] *Moniteur*, 15th August and 4th September.

"My children, you are the hope of the fatherland. . . . There are among you great captains. It is your duty to give peace to Europe."

The review took the form of a demonstration, of which the Minister was the object. The simple phrase, "There are among you great captains," hit the popular fancy, and gave an impetus to the conscription.

Sieyès became every day more alarmed at the impression which Bernadotte was making upon public opinion. "His proclamations," he used to say, "animate and inflame France. We are no longer of any account. Nobody takes any notice of us. It is the Minister of War who constitutes the Government." Barras makes the following comment:—

"It is quite true that Bernadotte was actually governing by his vigorous action. He was the only military, patriotic, and administrative bond, which prevented at this moment the breaking-up of the Republic. Bernadotte was as simple-minded and loyal as he was energetic. All his plans and acts tended to the benefit and the defence of the Republic. They were marked by the utmost frankness, and would have served to strengthen the Directory, if the Directory had been susceptible of union amongst its members."[a]

A further element of discord began to show itself, when the Minister's demands for men and materials were rejected by the director. On one occasion Sieyès dangled the command of an army before Bernadotte, who replied that he was not disposed to accept a command, while the chair of the Directory was occupied by a president, who could not be relied upon to afford the means necessary for winning a victory. "It has been made too clear to me that you are all ice, when you ought to be all fire,"

[a] Barras, iv. 5.

said the Gascon.[a] This phrase hit off very happily the incompatibility of temperament, which divided the two men. Except on the occasion of these official encounters, the Minister always treated the director with the deference due to his age and his rank in the State. But this did not conciliate Sieyès, who quoted an old saw applied by the Spaniards to the Béarnais, "Feez et cortez," and used to say, "He is a Béarnais, and fully illustrates the truth and aptness of the proverb which sums up the character of the men of his country, 'False and courteous.'"

Bernadotte's popularity with the Jacobins increased the uneasiness of Sieyès, who used to mutter, when the Minister entered with his portfolio, "What next is coming out of this box of the Jacobins?" or, "Here comes Catiline." When plans for reviving public spirit came out of the box, the director used to say that the remedy was worse than the disease, and to complain that "Bernadotte, a former Chouan, would like to pose nowadays as a better patriot than myself." Alluding to Bernadotte's beak-like nose, he once described him as "a thrush who imagined himself an eagle," and declared that he (Sieyès) could no longer endure him.[b]

The directors had many ears, and were informed of the propositions which had been made to Bernadotte. The reports which reached them were highly coloured;[c] and more credence was given by Sieyès to the dangerous nature of the Jacobin overtures, than to the sincerity of their rejection by the Minister.

Sieyès' apprehensions were strengthened by Bernadotte's good repute among the more stable classes of

[a] Lafosse, 206.

[b] Barras, iii. 472, 473, iv. 10; (E.) iii. 598, iv. 11.

[c] Sarrazin, *Mémoires*, 117, 118; *Guerres civiles*, 413.

FOUCHÉ.
Minister of Police, 1799.
Who became Duke of Otranto under the Empire.

SIEYÈS.
Director of the French Republic, 1799.
Who became a Senator and a Count of the Empire.

Two organisers of the *Coup d'État* of Brumaire.

To face page 416.

society.[a] The directors were kept informed of all that went on at the War Office, where it was reported that, when the bankers of Paris were approached by the Ministers of Finance and of War with a view to a loan for war purposes, Perregaux, their spokesman, said that they were willing to advance money to Bernadotte at his personal risk or peril, but, if he asked it as Minister, they would not advance fifty francs, so discredited was the Directory's paper.[b]

The crowning event, which impelled Sieyès to take strong measures for the removal of Bernadotte, was a parliamentary crisis, in which the director saw a danger so urgent, as to require that the Ministry of War should be in more dependable custody.

The Jacobins, having failed to induce Bernadotte to lend his aid to a *coup d'état*, resolved to attain their objects by parliamentary methods. General Jourdan proposed, on the 13th September, that the Council of 500 should declare the country in danger.[c] A motion of this kind had the gravest possible significance. Its effect would be to suspend the Constitution, and to justify a resort to extraordinary measures, which might be all the more terrible because they were undefined. A similar parliamentary resolution had been utilised in 1792, in order to overthrow the Monarchy. It had about it the ring of a tocsin-bell of terror. The anti-Directorial party in the Council was in a majority; but, it included a considerable number of moderate men, who were disposed to shrink from unsheathing a weapon, which was associated in their minds with grim memories and vague alarms.

In order to influence the waverers, the Jacobins

[a] Sarrazin, *Guerres civiles*, 417.

[b] Ib. *Mémoires*, 116; *Guerres civiles*, 416; *Phil.* ii. 189.

[c] *Moniteur*, 16th September 1799.

organised a demonstration which was to assemble near the Council chamber, and to personify the force of public opinion. The Directory realised the danger, and gave specific directions to General Lefèbvre, the commander of the garrison of Paris, for the preservation of order and for the protection of deputies from mob interference. When Bernadotte, in the regular course of his duty, came to give his instructions, Lefèbvre observed that he had already received his commands from the Directory. Bernadotte fired off a volley of gasconades, which were promptly reported to Sieyès, and increased the latter's perturbation.[a]

Sieyès was now resolved that before the pending parliamentary crisis came to a head, Bernadotte should be got rid of. How he carried out his purpose will be related in the next chapter.

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 193, 194.

CHAPTER LXVIII

THE END OF BERNADOTTE'S MINISTRY—WAS IT RESIGNATION OR DISMISSAL?

SEPTEMBER 13–15, 1799

"The Executive Directory, Citizen Minister, in accordance with the wish, which you have so frequently expressed, to resume active service with the armies, has replaced you at the Ministry of War."—*Sieyès, President of the Directory, to Bernadotte, September* 14, 1799.

"Citizen Director . . . you accept a resignation which I have not given."—*Bernadotte's reply.*

"Il est au moins certain que le Béarnais fut, pour cette fois, le dupe de sa Rhetorique."—ALBERT VANDAL, *L'Avènement de Bonaparte*, i. 190.

SIEYÈS, in pursuance of his resolve that Bernadotte must go, summoned a meeting of his colleagues to consider the urgent necessity of a change at the Ministry of War. As two of the directors, Gohier and Moulins, were opposed to a dismissal, Sieyès endeavoured, in the first instance, to negotiate the Minister of War's resignation. It was, however, no easy matter to find a suitable and willing negotiator.

The first go-between, whom the Directory hit upon, was Cambacérès, Minister of Justice.[a] They proposed to him to undertake the Ministry of War *ad interim*, and to arrange with Bernadotte for his retirement. Cambacérès was an accomplished lawyer, and a skilful manager of popular assemblies. But it was one thing to undertake to draft a code, or to handle an assembly. It was a very different thing

[a] Vandal, i. 189.

to be suddenly called upon to break it gently to a fiery Gascon, that, in the opinion of the Executive Government, his services as Minister were no longer necessary or advantageous to the welfare of the army or the State. Cambacérès politely declined to act as the honest broker in such a delicate deal.

Sarrazin was next sent for, and was told that it was painful to the Directory to occasion any mortification to Bernadotte, whom they highly valued; that, unfortunately, he had been misled into acting the part of a Jacobin against the Government, who could no longer continue him as War Minister; but that, if he agreed to resign, they would appoint him commander-in-chief of the army of the Rhine.[a]

Bernadotte required time to consider this proposal. But Sieyès would not brook delay; and, as negotiations through agents had failed, himself tried his hand at cajoling the Minister into a voluntary resignation. There ensued a characteristic scene of comedy between the director and the Gascon.

Having summoned the Minister, on the pretext of consulting him about the organisation of an army, Sieyès launched into some insincere compliments and congratulations, and added: "We are not surprised that you have always preserved the wish to take command, on leaving the Ministry, of one of those armies, which you have fired with the enthusiasm which animates them." Bernadotte replied that, when he had completely reorganised the armies, re-established order in all branches of his department, and rendered an account of his stewardship, his best recompense on leaving the Ministry would be an order from the Government to rejoin his old comrades in arms.[b]

[a] Sarrazin, *Mémoires*, 122; *Phil.* ii. 195; *Guerres civiles*, 421.
[b] Gohier, i. 139–140; Lafosse, i. 213, 214.

Some writers have stated that Sieyès proceeded forthwith to treat this conditional reply as an immediate offer of resignation.[a] But Barras tells us that he (Barras) now stepped in, and took up the negotiations for the Minister's retirement.

Barras frankly proclaims the motive, which led him to unite with Sieyès in getting rid of Bernadotte. He came to the conclusion that either Sieyès or Bernadotte must go. He selected the line of least resistance. He saw that it would require a *coup d'état* to displace Sieyès, while it would be comparatively easy to induce Bernadotte to give way by an appeal to "his heart," which was so "capable of noble emotion." So, he sent for Bernadotte, and proceeded to extricate the Government from their difficulty by playing upon the Gascon's moral sensibilities.

Barras opened the attack by telling Bernadotte that Sieyès was alarmed at his continuance in office, regarding it as a source of public danger, and believing that Bernadotte was on the point of doing him some grievous mischief. He assured the Minister that he (Barras) had tried in vain to disabuse Sieyès' mind of these apprehensions. Such a situation could not be allowed to continue ; and, as Sieyès would not retire, nothing but a *coup d'état* removing Sieyès, or the resignation of Bernadotte, would solve the difficulty. He implored the Minister to give way in order to prevent public trouble and scandal. He then appealed to his military spirit :—

"Is the occupation of a Ministerial arm-chair equal to being on horseback in command of an army? Is it not at the head of an army that true fame is to be won, especially in the case of a soldier who has shown what manner of man he is, and who knows

[a] Lafosse, i. 214; Sarrans, i. 37; Gohier, i. 140.

of no glory superior to his own, except that which still remains for him to win ? "

Barras' shots were well directed, and hit their target at the centre. His appeal to Bernadotte to sacrifice himself for the sake of securing public peace touched the emotional Gascon, who delivered a rhetorical reply, from which we may quote some sentences :—

" You speak of commanding troops—I not only command them at present, but I direct them all ; and we are on the eve of attaining great results. . . . After all my well-laid plans, we cannot but be victorious. At the moment when I have carried the game so far, it would be very painful for me to abandon the chess-board, with which the Directory has intrusted me. . . . Do you ask me to relinquish my office to another ? I have no thirst for office. Let him who has that thirst, come and slake it. Do they want my resignation for the sake of peace ? Very well ; I will give you my resignation."

Barras says that Bernadotte was moved to tears, and that he himself, cynic though he was, was so deeply touched by the magnitude of the sacrifice, which the Minister was making, and by his manner of offering to make it, that he did not like to take him too promptly at his word. He accordingly prevented him writing his resignation on the spot, leaving him to act freely and in his own way.[a]

Barras, on his return from this interview, said to Sieyès, whom he found alone, " Your distrust of Bernadotte will now be removed. I have just left him. It is impossible to find a Minister less attached to power, or a citizen more devoted to his country, or more determined to save it. He has offered me his resignation. He is about to give it." " I shall not believe it," said

[a] Barras, iv. 12, 13 ; (E.) iv. 14, 15.

Sieyès, "until I see it signed by his hand. He is one of those changeable Gascons, from whom nothing is obtained, unless they are taken at their word." "There is no necessity for doing so," said Barras. "He has been taken at his word and has shown the most entire disinterestedness."

Sieyès, however, regarded every moment that Bernadotte remained in office as a possible source of public and of personal danger. "We must," he said, "take him at his word again. We shall make a mistake, if we await his resignation. Let us make an order at once, as if the resignation had been already received. Or, rather, let us treat it as having been received." Sieyès, having procured Barras' agreement to this course, sent for his colleague and faithful henchman Roger Ducos. These three directors, constituting a majority of the Directory, adopted the following letter, which Sieyès wrote out and signed as president :—

"PARIS, 28 *Fructidor, An. VII.* (14*th Sept.* 1799).

"The Executive Directory, Citizen Minister, in accordance with the wish, which you have so frequently expressed, to resume active service with the armies, has replaced you at the Ministry of War. They intrust the portfolio of war *ad interim* to General Milet-Mureau. You will deliver it to him. The Directory will receive you with pleasure during your stay in Paris, in order to confer with you about the command for which they destine you.

"SIEYÈS, President."[a]

Barras tells us that never was a poet prouder of his verses than Sieyès of this letter, which was accompanied by the following decree :—

[a] *Moniteur*, 17th September 1799.

"The resignation given by the Citizen General Bernadotte of his office of Minister of War has been accepted."[a]

When Bernadotte received these communications, he wrote, in the first instance, a comparatively tame and respectful letter expressing his regret for having lost the confidence of the Government through misrepresentation, and assuring them of his zeal in the service of the Republic; and handed it to General Sarrazin, to be transmitted to the Directory.[b]

Before this letter was despatched, his secretary, Rousselin de St. Albin, came to inform him of the arrival of a general, with instructions to take over the charge of the Ministry until the appointment of a new Minister. In view of this summary and unceremonious procedure, the Minister told his secretary of his conversation with Barras, and of the letter which he had just written. Rousselin de St. Albin, who—as was the case with all Bernadotte's aides-de-camp and subordinates—was much attached to his chief, considred that the proposed reply was unworthy of his reputation for courage and independence. He advised the Minister to withdraw the answer, which he had written, and proposed to tear up the letter, reminding him of the case of Sully tearing up the promise, which Henri IV. wrote to Madame de Verneuil. The Secretary could not have selected an historical parallel more likely to weigh with the Béarnais, who, accepting his advice, withdrew the first letter, and substituted the following epistle, which was published in all the newspapers, and passed into history:[c]—

[a] Barras, iv. 14; (E.) iv. 16. Gohier, i. 136–139.

[b] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 196. [c] Barras, iv. 16, 17; (E.) iv. 18, 19.

"CITIZEN DIRECTOR,—I have received your decree and the polite letter which accompanied it. You accept a resignation which I have not given. I have, on several occasions, represented to you the cruel situation of my brothers in arms. Deeply afflicted at the insufficiency of the means at the disposal of the War Department, I may have desired to escape from a position in which I am powerless to help them, and tormented by that sad reflection I may have expressed the wish to return to the armies. Now, when I am preparing to render the account of my Ministry up to 1st Vendemiaire (22nd September) you inform me that you destine me for a command. You add that you appoint the Citizen Milet-Mureau *ad interim*, to hand over my portfolio to my successor.

"I have felt bound to state the facts for the sake of Truth, which is beyond our control, Citizen Director. It belongs to our contemporaries and to the verdict of history which awaits us.

"After twenty years of uninterrupted labours you will be able to judge whether or not I have earned retirement on half-pay. I do not conceal from you that I stand in need of repose.

"Citizen Milet-Mureau shall receive all the information from me that he may require.

"BERNADOTTE."[a]

The directors Gohier and Moulins appear to have signed the official minute of the meeting of the Directory of the 14th September, which, written in Sieyès' handwriting, records the acceptance of Bernadotte's resignation.[b] Their indorsement of the minute may have been a mere official formality, as was sometimes the case in the era of the Revolution.[c] At all events they publicly dissociated themselves from it. Gohier, in his memoirs, tells us that the transaction was carried out in his absence, and that Moulins only heard of the dismissal on the following day.

When Gohier and Moulins became aware of what

[a] *Moniteur*, 17th September 1799.
[b] Vandal, i. 577.
[c] See Carnot's *Reply to Bailleul*, 147.

had happened, they at once repaired to their colleagues and asked whether Bernadotte was still Minister.[a] "We have received his resignation," said Sieyès. "It is not true that he gave it," said Moulins. "And even if he did," said Gohier, "had you any right to accept it in the absence of two colleagues, who, as you are aware, had entire confidence in him?" Barras replied that the majority of the directors could legally act in the absence of the minority. He admits, however, in his memoirs, that Gohier was justified in replying that this was one of those grave matters upon which all the directors should have been consulted. Sieyès, in explaining his motives to Gohier, referred to Bernadotte as one of the "premiers coryphées" of the Jacobins. Gohier retorted, "Has not Bernadotte given us sufficient proof of his zeal and fidelity? If our army is ready to take the offensive, to whom do we owe it? If twenty thousand conscripts are taking their places under our banners, to whose call have they responded?" Sieyès replied, "I have not forgotten what Bernadotte has done. But if the fatal declaration (*i.e.* that the country was in danger) puts arms into the hands of the Jacobins, I know what he could do at the head of a party who wish to dominate us all."[b]

Gohier and Moulins were not satisfied with mere protests. They made a State visit to Bernadotte. Arrayed in their robes of office, and escorted by the Directorial guard, they proceeded, through the streets and boulevards, to Bernadotte's little house in the Rue Cisalpine, and expressed to the ex-Minister their sympathy and their appreciation of his services.[c] This public visit rendered Bernadotte's dismissal a

[a] Gohier, i. 143. [b] Barras, iv. 20; Gohier, i. 127.
[c] Barras, iv. 20; Lafosse, i. 218.

disgrace with honour, which, like his retirement from the Viennese Embassy, served to increase his popularity and to enhance his reputation for independence of character.

Sieyès' object was attained. The news of Bernadotte's dismissal reached the Council of 500 on the second day of the debate upon General Jourdan's motion to declare the country in danger. A scene of intense excitement ensued. The Republican party took it as a blow directed against themselves and as the prelude to some *coup d'état*.[a] But the victory rested with Sieyès; for the incident helped to dishearten the waverers, and to bring about the defeat of General Jourdan's motion, which was rejected by 245 votes to 172.[b] We may rest assured that the triumphant president experienced considerable satisfaction, when, again taking the Gascon at his word, he indited and transmitted to him the following laconic decree :—

"30 *Fructidor, An VII.* (*16th Sept.* 1799).

"In view of the letter of the Citizen Bernadotte, General of Division, of the 29th instant, in which he requests his retirement on half-pay, retirement on half-pay is accorded to the Citizen Bernadotte, General of Division.

"SIEYÈS, President."[c]

Thus ended an incident in which Bernadotte was out-played at every point by cooler antagonists. "The Béarnais," as Vandal observes, "was, on this occasion, the dupe of his own rhetoric."[d] Was it a case of dismissal or of resignation? The question has been happily answered by describing Bernadotte as "démissionnaire malgré lui."[e]

[a] Gohier, i. 136, 137.
[b] *Moniteur*, 19th Sept. 1799.
[c] Barras, iv. 18; (E.) iv. 20.
[d] Vandal, i. 190.
[e] Pingaud, 40.

CHAPTER LXIX

JUDGMENTS PASSED UPON BERNADOTTE'S MINISTRY OF WAR BY BONAPARTE, BARRAS, BERNADOTTE HIMSELF, AND BY THE SWEDISH CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES

"During the time that Bernadotte was Minister, he committed nothing but blunders, and organised nothing."—NAPOLEON.

"Bonaparte lived and made armies live for several years on the immense materials which Bernadotte, with his patriotic ardour and eloquence, had created by a few months' labour."—BARRAS.

"The glory of battles won belongs in the first place to the generous soldiers who lose their lives in daily engagements, next to the intrepid generals who electrify them and stimulate their courage, and, in the last place only, to the Ministers."—BERNADOTTE.

"Known, if not as an anarchist, at least as an enthusiast for unlimited liberty."—*Baron Brinkmann, the Swedish Chargé d'Affaires, writing of Bernadotte in September* 1799.

NAPOLEON said at St. Helena that "during the time that Bernadotte was Minister, he committed nothing but blunders, and organised nothing."[a] Barras, on the other hand, declared that Bonaparte owed all the victories of the Marengo and Hohenlinden campaigns to "the material and personnel prepared by Bernadotte," and that the First Consul "lived and made armies live for several years on the immense materials which Bernadotte, with his patriotic ardour and eloquence, had created by a few months' labour." Gohier's opinion is to the same effect.[b]

That Napoleon should depreciate Bernadotte's

[a] *Corr. de N.* xxx., 317.

[b] Barras, iv. 127; (E.) iv. 162. Gohier, i. 88 et seq.

Ministry was necessary to his case, which was summed up in the celebrated allocution which he hurled at the head of Barras' secretary, as his justification of the revolution of Brumaire. "What have you done with that France which I left you in such a glorious position? I left you peace, I have found war. I left you victories, I have found defeats. I left you the millions of Italy, I have found everywhere spoliation and misery. What have you done with the hundred thousand Frenchmen whom I knew, the companions of my glory? They are dead."[a] It did not suit Bonaparte to admit that there was a single gleam of sunshine in the picture, which he was interested in painting in the gloomiest colours. On the other hand, Barras and Gohier were driven to exaggerate the merits of Bernadotte's Ministry, because it was the only good asset in the Directorial balance-sheet. We may set off their judgment against that of Bonaparte.

Contemporary military opinion was divided. General Servan, an ex-Minister of War and a military historian, praises Bernadotte's firmness and resourcefulness. We have seen that he was appreciated in Brune's army, and criticised in Masséna's.[b] Masséna's biographer makes the mistake of attributing Bernadotte's dismissal to his difference with Masséna;[c] and does not seem to have been aware that the Directory would have recalled Masséna, if Bernadotte had not dissuaded them.

Bernadotte's judgment upon himself is contained in his official report to the Government, in which he claimed that, by his appeals to the army, he had electrified soldiers worn out with fatigue; that he had

[a] Vandal, i. 306.

[b] Servan, quoted by Sarrazin, *Guerre de 24 ans*, 170.

[c] *Masséna*, par Koch, iii. 301, 342.

clothed, equipped, and armed 91,000 conscripts; that he had raised 40,000 horses, of which 15,000 had already been used as remounts; and that he had sent food, clothing, equipments, and reinforcements to the armies. He concluded with a modest disclaimer, which deserves to be quoted :—

" Some Republicans have seen fit to think that the moral strength, which I had imparted to the armies, had exercised no little influence over the brilliant successes which followed immediately upon my exit from the Ministry. I am far from acquiescing in this opinion. Granting that I contributed to a few useful combinations, to the creation of an army on the Lower Rhine, the diversion created by which so opportunely induced Prince Charles to march out of Helvetia; granting that I warded off an attack on a fortified town, that I hastened the provisioning of some of them, and unceasingly urged upon the Directorate the necessity of furnishing resources to the army of Italy, I would still refuse to accept the share, which it is sought to attribute to me in these memorable events. Ministers are doubtless performing their duty when they feed, clothe, and equip armies, and when they direct a few measures favourable to their combined progress; but it gives me pleasure to state openly that the glory of battles won belongs in the first place to the generous soldiers who lose their lives in daily engagements, next to the intrepid generals who electrify them and stimulate their courage, and, in the last place only, to the Ministers."[a]

Barras, commenting upon this extract from Bernadotte's report, adds: " The noble sentiment of justice and disinterestedness, which pervades this report, will reveal the principle of my estimation, and the reason of my praise." The modesty of this report of Bernadotte's is certainly very striking. But he seldom indulged in gasconades for the sake of boasting. He turned his native power of

[a] Barras, iv. 132; (E.) iv. 168, 169. Blomberg, ii. 31.

bluff and bravado to more practical purposes. They were weapons of offence and defence, which he wielded in conversation, debate, diplomacy, and even in campaigning. Sometimes they got out of hand, or missed fire; and brought him sadly to grief. But, as a rule, they were not resorted to for mere self-glorification.

The Swedish *chargé d'affaires* in Paris, in September 1799, was Baron Brinkmann. Five days after the retirement of Bernadotte he wrote to his Government a report upon the fall of the Minister of War. He refers to Bernadotte's administrative virtues, disinterestedness, personal rectitude, activity, and popularity, and he attributes his fall to the rumours, which were carried to the directors, that he was about to use his position for the overthrow of the Directory. He goes on to describe him as "known, if not as an anarchist, at least as an enthusiast for unlimited liberty."[a] Hardly ten years passed away before the time came, when Baron Brinkmann was summoned to Helsingfors from the Swedish legation in London to join in welcoming this enthusiast for unlimited "liberty," on his arrival in Sweden in the character of Crown Prince of that ancient kingdom; and the Baron lived long enough to realise that Bernadotte could be an enthusiast for Order as well as for Freedom.

[a] *Corr. diplomatique du Baron de Staël-Holstein*, 322.

PART X

THE RETURN OF BONAPARTE FROM EGYPT, AND THE COUP D'ÉTAT OF BRUMAIRE—THE FOREST OF SENART

OCTOBER–NOVEMBER 1799

"His" (Bernadotte's) "popularity remained a real one; his striking appearance, his eloquence, his cordial manners, something grand and sumptuous in his greeting, gave him influence and hold over men. To all appearance . . . nobody appeared more closely connected with Bonaparte, as he had married Désirée Clary, Joseph's sister-in-law. Yet nobody was less to be relied upon than this quasi-relative."—VANDAL, i. 280, 281.

"L'homme obstacle."—*Name given to Bernadotte by Bonaparte in connection with the* coup d'état *of Brumaire.*

PART X

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OCTOBER–NOVEMBER 1799

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CHAPTER LXX

BERNADOTTE TAKES A REST—THE RETURN OF GENERAL BONAPARTE FROM EGYPT

SEPTEMBER 15–OCTOBER 16, 1799

"I cannot attribute to myself any share in these victories. . . . They were prepared by my predecessor." — *Dubois Crancé (Minister of War in succession to Bernadotte) announcing the victories of Zurich and Bergen to the Directory, October 1799.*

"I have no fear that Bernadotte will consent to my assassination. But he will harangue the troops, and that is what gives me anxiety."—*Bonaparte before Brumaire.*

AFTER his retirement from the Ministry of War Bernadotte enjoyed a month of complete repose in his little house in the Rue Cisalpine. He lived in seclusion, receiving a few friends, among whom were Joseph and Lucien Bonaparte. One of his military subordinates has given an interesting account of the ex-Minister's simple life.[a]

Bernadotte's greatest pleasure was to play with his little son, Oscar, who was hardly three months old. He kept a pet hind in his garden, which ate out of his hand and slept at his feet. He had other companions who were not so innocent as Oscar or so tame as the hind; for among his visitors were some of the Jacobin party, who were working to have him recalled to the Ministry of War. When Desirée tried to induce him to break off his connection with men, whose views were so different from his own, Bernadotte replied that they were the pillars of that Revolution, without which he would have remained a poor lieutenant of infantry, and that he regarded

[a] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 199, 200; *Mém.* 125, 126.

them as lovers of liberty, who had no other aim than to oppose royalty. It was the recollection of the old regime, with its hopeless outlook for a bourgeois soldier, that drove Bernadotte into political alliance with a party, from the application of whose principles he would have been the first to shrink.

The course of public events brought consolation to the ex-Minister. In the course of the three weeks immediately following his retirement, the victories of Bergen and Castricum in Holland, and of Zurich in Switzerland followed each other in rapid succession; and when Dubois Crancé, the new Minister of War, presented the first of the captured flags to the Directory, he concluded his address with the following passage: "I cannot attribute to myself any share in these victories nor in those successes which have followed. They were prepared by my predecessor."[a]

About the same time tidings came from Egypt, which created an even greater sensation in Paris. On the 8th of October, at two o'clock, a salute of cannon communicated to the city the arrival of good news in the shape of a rose-coloured despatch from Bonaparte announcing that Aboukir had been retaken, and that the last Turk had been driven from the coasts of Egypt.[b] Paris gave way to enthusiasm; and there was a return of that appetite for glory which grows with being fed. But, side by side with this renascent military ardour, there burned everywhere the paler fire of political despair. Public opinion was profoundly dissatisfied with the weak and discredited Government of France. The want of a deliverer was widely felt—and quickly filled. The news of a victory in Egypt brought to men's minds the name

[a] Barras, iv. 24; (E.) iv. 27. [b] Vandal, i. 231.

of the victor. If Bonaparte had timed his return so as to suit his plans, he could not have selected a moment more psychologically favourable. On one day in October men were muttering to each other, "C'est Bonaparte qui nous manque"; the next day they were complimenting each other on the opportune event, "C'est Bonaparte qui arrive." On 9th October General Bonaparte, after an absence from France of fifteen months, and a voyage from Egypt of forty-seven days, disembarked at Fréjus. On 16th October he was in Paris.

The saying has often been repeated that Bonaparte, on his return from Egypt, "found the crown of France lying in the gutter and picked it up on the point of his sword." But during the twenty-four days, which intervened between his arrival and his *coup d'état*, he did much search-work with his sword-point, before he picked up the crown.

He surveyed all the political parties and coteries with his unerring *coup d'œil*; and before the end of October he had made up his mind to ally himself with Sieyès and the Moderate party in the Councils. He knew that he would be able to shake off the ex-abbé, whenever it might suit him to do so, and that the majority of the Moderate party would be easily reconciled to a dictatorship, if accompanied or followed by a generous distribution of places and rewards.

There were only two soldiers, from whom Bonaparte apprehended any risk of formidable opposition.[a] These were Moreau, who, as a general of the Republic, stood only second in reputation to himself, and Bernadotte, who was the only general except himself who cherished any political ambition, possessed any political aptitude, or enjoyed any marked popu-

[a] Vandal, i. 280.

larity with the armies and the public. Moreau was a distinguished commander in the field, but he had no force of character, and little influence or following. Bonaparte had never met Moreau; but he quickly won him over by paying him adroit compliments, and by publicly presenting him with a beautiful Damascene sword, a trophy from the East.

Bernadotte was not to be won by compliments or gifts. Albert Vandal, in the following passage, contrasts him with Moreau, and sketches him as "l'homme obstacle" in the path of Bonaparte's designs. He says of Moreau that there was nothing about him to attract or rouse enthusiasm. He lacked prestige, and had more reputation than popularity.

"A very different personage was Bernadotte, that political general, who had during his recent term of office as Minister of War stood forth in a blaze of limelight, and had seemed for the moment to be the incarnation of National Defence. His popularity remained a real one; his striking appearance, his eloquence, his cordial manners, something grand and sumptuous in his greeting, gave him influence and hold over men. To all appearance, although he was always classed with the Jacobins, nobody appeared more closely connected with Bonaparte, as he had married Desirée Clary, Joseph's sister-in-law. Yet nobody was less to be relied upon than this quasi-relative. He did not forget that he could have seized power when a Minister, and that he had allowed it to escape from weakness of character. Would he consent to help another to seize it?"[a]

Bonaparte himself said of Bernadotte: "I have no fear that Bernadotte will consent to my assassination; but he will harangue the troops, and that is what gives me anxiety." This observation illustrates Bonaparte's singular power of measuring the

[a] Vandal, i. 280, 281; cf. Rovigo (transl.), i. 151.

strength and weakness of the men, with whom he had to deal. He saw clearly where his danger lay. A stirring appeal delivered to the troops at the right moment might upset all his plans. He had left his own army behind him in Egypt; and had been for fifteen months out of touch with the troops in France, who, unlike the prætorians of the Roman Empire, were genuinely Republican, and were not prepared to lend themselves to set up a military dictatorship.[a] In spite of the greater glamour of Bonaparte's military fame, Bernadotte was more in sympathy and accord with the views and aspirations of the men in the ranks; while, as an "entraineur des hommes," the Gascon had no equal among the generals of the Republic. Bonaparte has been described as "un mauvais harangueur";[b] while Bernadotte knew instinctively how to win the ears and how to catch the concurrence of a military audience. Here lay Bernadotte's strength, and, if he had dared to use it resolutely, Europe might have been spared some of the sixteen years of war which Bonaparte's supremacy entailed, and history might have been robbed of one of its most fascinating chapters.

[a] Vandal, i. 278. [b] *Ib.* i. 317.

CHAPTER LXXI

BONAPARTE AND BERNADOTTE BEFORE THE 18TH BRUMAIRE

OCTOBER 16–NOVEMBER 8, 1799

"Bernadotte . . . is an obstacle. . . ."

"Bernadotte has Moorish blood in his veins. He is bold and enterprising. He is allied to my brothers. He does not like me, and I am almost certain that he will oppose me. . . . He is disinterested and clever."—*General Bonaparte to Bourrienne, October 1799.*

"I do not despair of the Republic, and I am convinced that she will resist her enemies, both *domestic* and foreign."—*Bernadotte to Bonaparte, October 1799.*

BONAPARTE had been in Paris for about ten days before he met Bernadotte. But the two men were, in the meantime, much concerned with each other's plans and proceedings.

Bernadotte, on hearing of the landing at Fréjus, sent a message to the Directory, urging them to bring Bonaparte before a military tribunal for having deserted his army and for having violated the quarantine law, and he volunteered to take the Directory's commands in the matter. The President of the department of the Seine also proposed the arrest of Bonaparte, and the appointment of Bernadotte as commandant of Paris. But Barras replied that the Government was not strong enough to take such a step, and would give no answer except "Attendons" —"Let us wait and see."[a]

Bernadotte, although living in the inner circle of the Bonaparte family, avoided meeting the general, and freely expressed to his friends the disapproval and

[a] Lafosse, i. 220; Pingaud, 44.

distrust, with which he regarded this return of the "deserter of Egypt." It was proposed to give Bonaparte a banquet. Bernadotte declined to be a party to it, and advised the organisers to adjourn the dinner, until the general justified his abandonment of his army.[a]

Bonaparte made many inquiries about Bernadotte, and endeavoured, by adroit disparagement, to counteract his opposition. His inquiries elicited all that happened during Bernadotte's Ministry of War, and he expressed much surprise at Bernadotte's refusal to take the opportunities, which had been offered to him, of seizing power by a *coup d'état*.

To Bourrienne, Bonaparte observed: "I have already learned many things. . . . What a singular man is Bernadotte! When he was Minister of War, Augereau, Jourdan, and some others sought him out, and told him that the Constitution was in danger, and that they must get rid of Sieyès, Barras, and Fouché, who were implicated in a conspiracy. What did Bernadotte do? Nothing. He asked for proofs. They could not give him any. He asked also for powers. Who could give him any? Nobody. He should have seized them. But he did not dare. He wavered. He said that he could not enter upon the plans which they proposed to him. He only promised to be silent on condition that they renounced their projects. Bernadotte is not a help, he is an obstacle. One of the deputation informed me that they told Bernadotte that a great number of influential persons wished to invest him with extensive power in order to save the State. But he was obstinate. He would listen to nothing."[b]

[a] *Note Historique*; Pingaud, 45.

[b] Bourr. iii. 42, 43; and see App. Note (23).

On the same occasion Bonaparte instituted the following comparison between Bernadotte and Moreau, in which he again showed his remarkable power of appraising the relative value of the men, with whom he had to count. He said : " I believe I shall have Bernadotte and Moreau against me. But I do not fear Moreau. He is devoid of energy. I know he would prefer military to political power. The promise of the command of an army would gain him over. But Bernadotte has Moorish blood in his veins. He is bold and enterprising. He is allied to my brothers. He does not like me, and I am almost certain that he will oppose me. If he should become ambitious, he will venture anything, and yet you recollect in what a lukewarm way he acted on the 18th Fructidor, when I sent him to second Augereau. This devil of a fellow is not to be seduced. He is disinterested and clever. But, after all, we have but just arrived and know not what may happen." [a]

Some ten days passed in this fashion. All the generals and statesmen of Paris vied with each other in paying court to Bonaparte. Bernadotte alone kept aloof. At last he yielded to the pressure, which, at Josephine's suggestion, was brought to bear upon him by Joseph Bonaparte, Madame Joseph, and Pauline Leclerc. Bonaparte received him in a friendly and affable way; and the conversation turned upon the Egyptian campaign and the political situation. When Bonaparte referred to the deplorable position of France in the terms of exaggeration, which it suited his purposes to adopt, Bernadotte instantly bridled up, and poured forth a vehement apologia, to which Bonaparte listened with impatience. " Nevertheless, General," said Bernadotte, " the Russians

[a] Lafosse, i. 222; Bourr. iii. 43, 44.

have been beaten in Switzerland, and have retired to Bohemia. The line of defence between the Alps and Apennines is maintained, and we are in possession of Genoa. Holland is saved. The Russian army has been destroyed, and the English army has been forced to capitulate at Helder. . . . Two hundred auxiliary battalions, each a thousand strong, and forty thousand horses have been raised. In eight months or more we shall not know what to do with such a multitude of men, unless we pour them into Germany and Italy, like torrents. Indeed," added Bernadotte sarcastically, "if you had brought back the army of Egypt with you, the veterans of that corps would perhaps be very useful to provide us with officers. But although we must regard that army as lost, or at least as not likely to return except under the shadow of a treaty, I do not despair of the Republic, and I am convinced that she will resist her enemies, both *domestic* and foreign." Bonaparte winced at the reference to the domestic enemies of the Republic, and retorted that, if it was true that 200,000 men had been raised, the absence of the army of Egypt mattered very little. At this point Madame Bonaparte tactfully changed the conversation.[a]

After this interview Bonaparte rejoined his secretary Bourrienne, who says that he was agitated, and that he repeated Bernadotte's rhetorical outburst, adding that when the Gascon spoke of enemies "both *domestic* and foreign," he looked significantly at him (Bonaparte), and was met with a defiant glance. Josephine confirmed his account of the scene, and added that Bernadotte's look, when he referred to "domestic enemies," made her shudder, and that she

[a] *Note Historique*; Lafosse, i. 223.

was afraid that Bonaparte had said too much about the necessity of changes in the Government.[a]

On returning to the Rue Cisalpine, Bernadotte was questioned by his wife as to what had happened. Desirée appears to have acted, during this critical period, as a sort of involuntary spy, not for the last time, upon her husband. Her sister, Madame Joseph Bonaparte, as well as Joseph and Lucien, plied her with questions, which she answered very frankly. It is probable that she did not sympathise with her husband's opposition to projects, in which the Bonaparte family were so deeply interested.[b]

Joseph and Lucien induced Bernadotte to visit Bonaparte again; and he did so accompanied by Rousselin de St. Albin, who had been his secretary at the Ministry of War. At this interview Bonaparte indulged in a tirade against the Jacobins and the Club of the Riding Hall.[a] The cudgels were taken up —whether by Bernadotte or by Rousselin de St. Albin is not quite certain. It was pointed out that some of Bonaparte's confederates were more mixed up in the club than Bernadotte, who was not one of its originators and did not attend its meetings. Bonaparte suddenly exclaimed: "Well, General, I will tell you plainly—I should prefer to live wild in the woods than in a state of society, which affords no security." Bernadotte replied: "My God, General, what security would you have?" Before Bonaparte had time to reply, Josephine once more intervened, and turned the tide of conversation into a less dangerous channel.[b]

Bernadotte everywhere proclaimed his opposition to Bonaparte. For example, meeting Guérin, the artist, at the opera, he told him that there was a conspiracy on foot against the Republic, and that

[a] Bourr. iii. 47–52. [b] *Note Historique*; Pingaud, 42–44.

the Corsican was about to overthrow the Directory, adding: "Mais je connais mon devoir et nous verrons."[a]

The next meeting of Bernadotte with Bonaparte was by chance at the Théâtre Français. Bonaparte shook hands and asked him whether he was to be at a party, which his brother Joseph was giving at Mortefontaine on the following day. Bernadotte replied in the affirmative. "Very well," said Bonaparte. "Will you allow me to take coffee with you in the morning. I must pass your house. I should like to look in on you for a few minutes on my way." Bernadotte gave a polite assent.

Bonaparte, on the following morning, told Bourrienne of this incident, and added, "Never fear, never fear. I know what I am about. This will compromise him with Gohier. Remember, you must always meet your enemies with a bold face, otherwise they think they are feared, and that gives them confidence."

Bonaparte proceeded to the Rue Cisalpine, where Desirée prepared a sumptuous *déjeuner*, and filled the little "cot" to overflowing. Bernadotte was not pleased, but had to accept her playful explanation that "it was to make General Bonaparte forget the delights of Egypt." After taking coffee, while Desirée entertained Josephine with what an eye-witness describes as "une amiabilité de convention," the two generals retired to an arbour, and were observed to engage in animated conversation. Sarrazin says that Bonaparte on this occasion, for the second time since his return to Paris, tried to lull Bernadotte's hostility by holding out the hope that he would take him as a colleague in the new Government.[b]

[a] *L'Intermédiaire des chercheurs et curieux*, vii. 182, 282.

[b] *Note Historique*; Bourr. iii. 52, 53; Sarrazin, *Mém.* 130, 131; *Guerres civiles*, 423.

From the Rue Cisalpine the breakfast-party found their way to Mortefontaine, Joseph Bonaparte's country house, where were assembled Talleyrand, Roederer, Regnault de St. Jean d'Angély, and other leaders of the grand conspiracy, which was to make history in a few days. Bernadotte could not fail to observe that some enterprise was on foot, in which he had no part. Groups gathered mysteriously and conversed with animation, but became silent or broke up when he approached.

Bernadotte returned to Paris with the conviction that mischief was brewing. On the following day he met General Moreau, who asked him whether he had been at Mortefontaine, and whether he had conversed with Bonaparte. Bernadotte replied in the affirmative. "That is the man," said Moreau, "who has done the most harm to the Republic." "Yes," said Bernadotte, "and who is preparing to do more harm." "We shall stop him," said Moreau. The two generals promised to support each other in opposition to the "deserter of Egypt." But Bonaparte had taken Moreau's measure, and had nothing to fear from him.[a]

At the end of October the Jacobin party met at Bernadotte's house, where Jourdan and Augereau were present, and the policy of the party was discussed. There was much difference of opinion. Jourdan proposed that he should approach Bonaparte on behalf of the party, and offer to place him at the head of the Executive, if guarantees were given for the maintenance of representative Government and of liberty. On the 10th Brumaire (31st Oct.) Jourdan called on Bonaparte, who, on finding his card, invited him to dinner for the 16th Brumaire

[a] *Note Historique*; Pingaud, 44.

(6th Nov.). He invited Bernadotte for the same evening. Jourdan and Bernadotte accepted the invitation in ignorance that the *coup d'état* was fixed for the 18th Brumaire (8th Nov.), and that the invitation to them was intended to aid their host's designs.[a]

At Bonaparte's dinner-party, on 6th November, the conversation turned upon military topics. Bonaparte advocated his favourite military system —the War of Invasion. His view was based partly upon the wide extent of the frontiers, which had to be protected in a defensive campaign, as contrasted with the concentration of force, which an aggressive campaign developed. Bernadotte took the opposite side, and concluded an animated argument with a home-thrust—exclaiming that it was easier to invade territory than to keep it. The dinner, however, passed off amicably. Bourrienne and Josephine had entered into a compact to be on the alert, to prevent any exchange of angry words between the host and his Gascon guest.[b]

After dinner, Bonaparte held a crowded reception, and took an opportunity of pointing in a bantering way to Bernadotte, and describing him as a Chouan. Bernadotte replied: "You should be consistent, General. A few days ago you accused me of showing favour to the most extreme Republicans. Now you accuse me of protecting the Chouans. The contradiction is too obvious."[b]

On the following evening, 17th Brumaire (7th Nov.), Joseph Bonaparte left word at the Rue Cisalpine that Bernadotte might expect him early the following morning. Bernadotte did not know that the message heralded a new era in the history of France. Bonaparte, before retiring to rest, told

[a] Vandal, i. 272, 294. [b] *Note Historique*; Bourr. iii. 54–55.

Bourrienne that Joseph was going to call on Bernadotte to ask him to come in the morning. Bourrienne said that he believed that Bernadotte would not be on their side. "I believe so too," said Bonaparte; "but he can no longer injure me, and that is enough."[a]

Chateaubriand says that, when Bonaparte returned from Egypt, there were only four men capable of barring his path to power, namely, Barras, Sieyès, Bernadotte, and Moreau.[b] In less than three weeks Bonaparte had succeeded in isolating Barras, in coming to an understanding with Sieyès, and in disarming Moreau. Bernadotte was the only man of character and influence, who continued to stand in his way.

[a] Bourr. iii. 67.

[b] Chateaubriand, *Mémoires d'outre Tombe*, livre i. 97.

CHAPTER LXXII

BERNADOTTE ON THE 18TH BRUMAIRE

NOVEMBER 8, 1799

"You are not in uniform!" "I am not on duty." "But you soon will be." "I think not."—*Conversation between Bonaparte and Bernadotte on the morning of the 18th Brumaire.*

"Promise me that you will undertake nothing against me." "Yes, as citizen, I promise." "What do you mean by 'as citizen'?" "I mean that I shall not *of my own initiative* go to the barracks and harangue the troops, or to the public places to excite the national guard or the people. But if the Directory calls on me, or if the legislative body gives me the command of its guard, I shall be prepared to take the field against those who may seek to overthrow illegally the existing Constitution."—*Ib.*

SIEYÈS and Bonaparte had fixed the 18th and 19th Brumaire (8th and 9th November 1799) as the days for carrying out their *coup d'état*. The governing idea of the conspiracy was that the directors and the Councils were to be utilised as the instruments of their own destruction. In the Constitution itself were to be found the materials and machinery for its overthrow. Their plan required two days for its accomplishment.[a] On the 18th the Council of Ancients, or rather a fraction of that assembly, selected as reliable, were to meet early in the morning. This packed gathering was to pass a decree transferring the *corps législatif* from Paris to St. Cloud, and appointing General Bonaparte to command the guard of the Council and all the troops in Paris. On the following day, the 19th, the Councils were to meet at St. Cloud, far away from public observa-

[a] Vandal, i. 268–270.

tion, and from the Jacobin atmosphere, which was incidental to a sitting of Parliament in the capital. It was hoped that the Councils might be induced by persuasion and by intrigue to sanction the prearranged Constitution. But they were to be surrounded by troops under the command of General Bonaparte. If persuasion and intrigue failed, the troops would be ready to intervene, and to apply whatever force might be necessary to effectuate the purpose of the conspirators.

The rendezvous of the generals, and of the superior officers, who were to take part in the first day's work, was at General Bonaparte's house in the Rue Chantereine, where they were to await the arrival of the decree appointing the general to the command of the troops.

Early on the morning of the 18th Brumaire (8th November) Joseph Bonaparte called at the "cot" in the Rue Cisalpine, and told Bernadotte that General Bonaparte wished to see him, and to consult him upon the steps which should be taken in the impending crisis.[a] Bernadotte, who was not in the confidence of the conspirators, followed his brother-in-law. They found Bonaparte's house and courtyard thronged with generals and other officers of high rank, who overflowed into the street and were obviously affected by an excitation of feeling which was proportionate to the hazard of the day's work that lay before them.[b]

It was with difficulty that Bernadotte threaded his way to the room in which Napoleon was breakfasting with an aide-de-camp, while General Lefèbvre, the Military Governor of Paris, stood by in an awkward attitude, as if he were a prisoner or

[a] Lafosse, i. 233. [b] Vandal, i. 304–306.

a lackey. Lefèbvre was regarded as Barras' "homme à tout faire," and had been induced to join the movement by the unfounded allegation that Barras was with it. He was now committed to Bonaparte irrevocably. Bernadotte took a seat and motioned to Lefèbvre to do likewise. The old guardsman sat down with a look of awe and respect directed towards Napoleon.

Napoleon, observing that Bernadotte was in mufti, exclaimed: "You are not in uniform!" "I am not on duty," was his reply. "But you soon will be," said Napoleon. "I think not," said Bernadotte. Napoleon then drew Bernadotte into an adjoining room and said: "The Directory is governing badly. It will ruin the Republic, unless we set it to rights. The Council of Ancients has appointed me Commandant of Paris, of the National Guards, and of all the troops of the metropolitan division. Go, put on your uniform, and rejoin me at the Tuileries, whither I am just going."[a]

Bernadotte declined this invitation. Napoleon then proceeded: "Ah, I see how it is. You think you can count upon Moreau, Beurnonville, and the other generals! You are mistaken. You will see them all come to me, even Moreau." He then mentioned about thirty of the members of the Council of Ancients, whom Bernadotte believed to be entirely loyal to the Directorial Constitution. "You do not know men," he added. "They promise much and perform little. Do not trust them." "I do not wish to take part in a rebellion," replied Bernadotte firmly, "nor to upset a Constitution cemented with the blood of so many men." "Very well," said Bonaparte, "stay here until I have received the decree of the Council

[a] *Note Historique*; Lafosse, i. 233; Pingaud, 45; Bourr. iii. 69.

of Ancients. Until then I have no authority." "General," said the Gascon, raising his voice, and brandishing his sword-cane, "I am a man who may be killed, but who cannot be detained against his will."[a]

If we are to believe Sarrazin, Bonaparte informed Bernadotte of the arrangement to associate with himself in the Government Sieyès and Roger Ducos, and added that he wished Bernadotte to be assured of his desire to do everything that might be personally agreeable to Bernadotte and his friends. Sarrazin was of opinion that Bernadotte's indignation was increased by the fact that Napoleon had tried to win him by holding out hopes that he would be one of his colleagues.[b]

Bonaparte, seeing that Bernadotte was not to be won to his side, sought to neutralise his opposition. "Promise me," he said, "that you will not undertake anything against me." "Yes," said Bernadotte, "as citizen, I promise." "What do you mean by 'as citizen'?" "I mean," replied Bernadotte, "that I shall not of my own initiative go to the barracks to harangue the soldiers, or to any public places to excite the national guard or the people. But if the Directory calls on me, or if the legislative body gives me the command of its guard, I shall be prepared to take the field against those, who may seek to overthrow illegally the existing Constitution." "Oh, I feel quite easy on that score," said Bonaparte. "I have taken every precaution, and you will not receive any such command. They fear your ambition more than mine. Besides, believe me, that my only

[a] Vandal, i. 306; *Note Historique*; Lafosse, i. 235.

[b] Sarrazin, *Phil.* ii. 201, 202; *Guerres civiles*, 24; *L'Art de la guerre*, 236.

wish is to save the Republic. I want nothing for myself. I shall retire to Malmaison, after surrounding myself with the society of my friends. If you wish to be one of the number, you will be very welcome." "Good friendship," said Bernadotte, "is possible, but I believe that you will always be the most imperious of masters."[a]

Bernadotte retired, and, as he walked away through the crowd of uniformed generals, he perceived Moreau and Beurnonville, but not Jourdan or Augereau. As he was leaving the Rue Chantereine, the messenger of the Council of Ancients arrived, carrying to Bonaparte his letter of command, and he heard the order given to the assembled officers to proceed to the Tuileries.[a]

Joseph, who had followed Bernadotte by Napoleon's directions, brought him to his house to breakfast. Here Joseph had collected some members of the Council, whom it was thought prudent to keep away, until the decree of translation to St. Cloud had been agreed to. The breakfast-party was a *déjeuner* of dupes. Joseph assured his guests that his brother had no other aim than to procure the consolidation of liberty, and no other ambition than to live in seclusion at Malmaison. Bernadotte warned his brother-in-law that the *coup d'état* was doomed to failure, and predicted that, later on, he might be in a position to save Joseph from the consequences of his treason.[a]

When Joseph's *déjeuner* of dupes broke up, Bernadotte proceeded to the Tuileries garden. He was well received by the troops along the boulevards. At the Tuileries he found the 79th demi-brigade drawn up. They were attached to him, having

[a] *Note Historique*; Lafosse, i. 235–237; Barras, iv. 81–83; Vandal, i. 386.

served with him at the siege of Maestricht and elsewhere. The officers questioned him as to what was going to happen, and as to why he was in mufti, and not in the company of the other generals, who were known to be engaged upon some grave public enterprise. This was an opportunity, of which his promise to Bonaparte debarred him from availing himself. Bernadotte gave an evasive reply, and repaired to General Jourdan, to inform him of his reception by the troops, and to confer with him as to the course which they should pursue. At Jourdan's he met a number of the Republican deputies, who were indignant at the decree of translation of the *corps législatif* to St. Cloud.[a]

From Jourdan's Bernadotte went home and was informed that Bonaparte and Moreau had sent an officer to invite him to join his friends at the Tuileries, and to tell him that they were as patriotic as he was, and that they eagerly wished for his co-operation in saving their country. Bernadotte took no notice of the invitation.[a]

Bonaparte made another effort to win over *l'homme obstacle*, through General Sarrazin, who went to Bernadotte, with whom he found Augereau, Jourdan, and some of the extreme Republican deputies. He drew Bernadotte aside and told him "that everything seemed to be settled; that it would be absurd to see him censure the part adopted by the army, of which he was one of the principal chiefs; and that he might be assured, notwithstanding his warmth in the morning, that Bonaparte would give him the sincerest welcome." Bernadotte replied "that he had already formed his resolution, and that he would prefer to be cut in pieces rather than to contribute to enslave his country; and

[a] *Note Historique*; Lafosse, i. 239, 240.

he begged Sarrazin not to mention the name of Bonaparte, who, in his eyes, was only the Cromwell of France." These words were pronounced in a very high tone, and were heard and applauded by the assembled company.[a]

Later in the day Moreau, who was entrusted with the duty of keeping guard over the two Republican directors, Gohier and Moulins, and felt the ingloriousness of his allotted task, sent a message to Bernadotte, asking him to come to the Luxembourg Palace and confer with him as to the steps to be taken to prevent Bonaparte seizing the dictatorship.[b]

Bernadotte replied that, not being invested with any command, he considered himself bound by the promise which he had given to Bonaparte not to undertake anything in his character of a citizen, but that he was prepared to respond to the appeal of a public man claiming his assistance with apparent legality. He regarded Moreau as a man who occupied that position, being commandant of the Directorial bodyguard. "Let General Moreau," he added, "present himself at my door at the head of a detachment, however small. Let him summon me in the name of the public good to make common cause with him to defend liberty and the Constitution. Then I shall mount my horse with my aides-de-camp, and place myself under his orders. I shall harangue the troops, cause Bonaparte to be arrested and tried for having deserted the army of Egypt, and for having violated the Constitution in having accepted a command given to him by a fraction of the *corps législatif*." Moreau, of course, declined to take so bold an initiative.[b]

[a] Sarrazin, *Mém.* 133; *Phil.* ii. 206.

[b] *Note Historique*; Lafosse, i. 242, 243.

In the evening a conference of Republicans was held, at which Jourdan, Bernadotte, Augereau, Salicetti, and others were present; and it was arranged that, at the meeting of the Councils, on the following day, at St. Cloud, Bonaparte should be declared an outlaw, and that Bernadotte should be appointed commander of the Guard of the Council of 500 and of all the troops of Paris. By consenting to this proposal, Bernadotte was not breaking his promise to Bonaparte. He had stipulated that he would act, if called upon by the Legislature. Salicetti hastened to give information of this counterplot to Bonaparte,[a] who told him to rejoin the recalcitrant deputies, and tell them that he (Bonaparte) was using his influence to prevent the passing of a decree for their deportation. He calculated that this announcement would frighten, or draw to himself, some of Bernadotte's supporters—and he was not mistaken in this anticipation.[b] Bonaparte appears to have been kept informed by Salicetti of the plans of the Opposition, just as Cromwell in 1644 was kept informed by Whitelocke of the plots of the Presbyterians.

Thus closed the 18th Brumaire, a day of plots and counterplots, of force and audacity on one side, and of irresolution and vacillation on the other.[c]

[a] Sorel, v. 474; Sloane, ii. 74. [b] Vandal, i. 341–343.

[c] Savary says that, on the morning of the 18th Brumaire, Bernadotte, meeting Bonaparte on his way to review his troops on the Champs Élysées, warned him that he was on the way to the guillotine, and that Bonaparte replied laconically, "Nous verrons." Savary was not in Paris at the time, and the story does not seem to have received any confirmation.—Rovigo (transl.), i. 152.

CHAPTER LXXIII

THE MORNING OF THE 19TH BRUMAIRE

NOVEMBER 9, 1799

"Let one of you ascend the tribune . . . and propose that the Council of Five Hundred appoint General Bernadotte to be the colleague of General Bonaparte. . . . Send me such a decree, and in twenty minutes after its receipt I shall be with my aides-de-camp in your midst. . . . If it is necessary to declare General Bonaparte an outlaw, you will have at your side a general, and, at the very least, a great portion of the troops."—*Bernadotte's offer to the Jacobin deputies on the morning of the 19th Brumaire.*

THE 19th Brumaire was an epoch-making day. But the proceedings at St. Cloud had more of the air of a comedy about them than is usually characteristic of those famous days of history, in which epochs have been inaugurated. The public treated it in this spirit; and, after the *coup d'état* was over, the theatres made it the topic of farces and burlesques.[a]

It is true that great risks were being run, and that some of the actors knew it. Sieyès' horses were harnessed all day to his carriage, and remained near the Palace of St. Cloud, so as, if necessary, to facilitate his escape.[b] With a similar object in view, one of the conspirators had concealed his children in the park. Bourrienne, the private secretary, driving through the Place de la Concorde with Lavalette, the aide-de-camp, pointed to the scene of so many executions, and remarked, "To-morrow we shall either sleep at the Luxembourg Palace, or we shall make an end of it here."[c]

But the pessimists were in a minority. The well-informed were, as a rule, confident and in high

[a] Pingaud, 47. [b] Sorel, v. 476. [c] Vandal, i. 349, 350.

spirits. Fouché was believed to be policing Paris in their interests. Troops were filing through the streets to the rendezvous, under the faithful Lefèbvre. Poets, artists, literary men were among the curious crowd who wended their way in the same direction. Talleyrand, with characteristic *insouciance*, had arranged a sort of picnic-party in a neighbouring country house.[a]

Bonaparte started in a carriage from his house in the Rue Chantereine, where a crowd of generals were congregated. He was in high spirits. He called Berthier, his inseparable chief of his staff, and then turned to the corpulent General Gardanne, a popular and gallant officer, and with a gentle rap, exclaimed, "Vous aussi, gros papa!" Josephine wished to accompany him, but it was not a ladies' day, and he drove off with Berthier and Gardanne.[a]

Meanwhile, the hopes of the forces of the Opposition centred upon Bernadotte.[b] They had plenty of materials to work upon, if there had been anybody capable of skilfully organising and resolutely handling them. The majority of the Council of 500 were opposed to the projected *coup d'état*, but were without any leader of sufficient authority or prestige. Bernadotte enjoyed their confidence; and the public, discounting his Gascon exuberance of language and thought, believed him to be disinterested and patriotic, and knew him to be brave and energetic. The spirit of the troops was Republican, not prætorian. Bernadotte's popularity with all ranks had been enhanced by the circumstances under which he had been recently dismissed from the Ministry of War. He had no equal in the power of carrying soldiers with him in moments of emergency and excitement.

[a] Vandal, i. 349–352, 392. [b] *Ib.* i. 341.

Now was his opportunity, if he dared, or could bring himself, to seize it.

At 5 a.m. on the morning of the 19th Brumaire, Generals Jourdan and Augereau met some of the leading deputies of the Council of 500, and repaired to Bernadotte's house in the Rue Cisalpine. Their object was to ascertain what Bernadotte recommended, and what he was prepared to do.[a]

Bernadotte was not prepared to take any action without a command or summons from the legislature, or from some other superior authority. Bonaparte's appointment by the Council of Ancients to be commander of their guard had been procured by an obvious trick ; but it had become an act of State, and was a *fait accompli*. Bernadotte was willing to obey a similar call, if sent to him by the other branch of the legislature. If invested with authority by the Council of 500, he was prepared to mount his horse; but he could not bring himself, without some such authority, to act upon his own initiative. This represented the rule of duty, which he had laid down for himself, and accorded with the promise, which he had given to Bonaparte.

His offer to the deputies is reported to have been made in the following terms :—

" Let one of you ascend the tribune, and describe succinctly the external and internal situation of France. He will be able to prove easily that we are in a position to obtain a peace as honourable as that of Campo Formio, and that, in order to maintain such a peace, we have only to preserve the commanding position, which we occupy. Then speak of the necessity for reciprocal confidence. After having pointed out that Bonaparte's investiture by a fraction of the Council of Ancients is a violation of the Constitution,

[a] *Note Historique*; Lafosse, i. 243.

disclaim on the part of the Council of Five Hundred any intention of discussing the violation, but only of giving security to the nation, the Legislature, and the Government. Propose, with this object in view, that the Council of Five Hundred shall appoint General Bernadotte to be the colleague of General Bonaparte; so that the two generals shall act in concert in employing armed force, if it becomes necessary to have recourse to such force, and in the distribution of commands; conclude by giving the assurance that a tranquillity reigns in Paris and its vicinity, which justifies the presumption that there will be no necessity to bring the troops into action. Send me such a decree," said Bernadotte; " twenty minutes after its receipt I shall be with my aides-de-camp in your midst. I shall take command of the corps I meet on my path, and we shall then see what there is to be done. If it is necessary to proclaim Bonaparte an outlaw, you will have at your side a general and at the very least a great portion of the troops."[a]

The conference broke up, and the deputies left for St. Cloud. If Bernadotte had himself been willing and able to carry out his programme, it is possible that the events of this fateful day might have taken a different course. But he was not a member of the Councils; and the Jacobin deputies were unequal to carrying out the plan of campaign, which he had sketched for them. So Bernadotte remained in Paris, far away from the scene of action—agitated, irresolute, and waiting upon events.

[a] *Note Historique*; Lafosse, i. 244, 246; Vandal, i. 342.

CHAPTER LXXIV

The Afternoon of the 19th Brumaire

"It was observed that some deputies remained at the door of the Orangery looking out as if they expected somebody. Was it Bernadotte on whom they counted? But Bernadotte remained at home, and waited for fortune, instead of seeking, and taking her by storm."—Albert Vandal, *L'Avènement de Bonaparte*, t. i. 366.

"He's honest. But for his obstinacy, my brothers would have brought him over."—*Bonaparte in reference to Bernadotte, 19th Brumaire (9th November 1799).*

It would have been difficult for the organisers of the *coup d'état* of Brumaire to have staged the last scenes of their comedy amidst more interesting and picturesque surroundings. The Palace of St. Cloud stood in a wooded park, perched on a sloping hill, which overlooked the winding river and commanded a distant view of the roofs and towers of Paris.

The Council of Ancients was to hold its meeting in the gorgeous gallery of Apollo, which was decorated with the paintings of Mignard, the rival of the celebrated Le Brun. The Council of 500 were to meet in the Orangery, which formed part of one of the wings of the palace and opened by large windows upon the gardens. The Councils were to meet at noon. But the workmen were busy fixing up benches, tribunes, and presidential chairs. For fully an hour after the appointed time, deputies and soldiers hung about, discussing the situation in animated groups, while the stage was being prepared for the play.[a]

While the Councils are waiting, we may recall

[a] Vandal, i. 355, 356.

something of the history of their momentary habitation. St. Cloud had once been an ecclesiastical fief of the metropolitans of Paris, and in bygone days, De Retz, *frondeur* and cardinal, knew it well when he was a young abbé, and the château was the residence of that easy-going prelate, his Uncle Peter. Then it became the country residence of the Orleans branch of the royal family. It was here that Charles I.'s daughter, Henrietta d'Orleans, died that mysterious death, the circumstances of which have never been cleared up. Here lived Philip d'Orleans, afterwards Regent; and it was in the Orangery, in which the Council of 500 were about to hold their stormy sitting, that St. Simon has recorded that he discussed with "Mademoiselle d'Orleans," her betrothal to the Duke de Berry. Here, during the Regency, lived the Regent's wife, and his mother, the Princess Palatine. Here was born Philip Egalité, who lived to see his birthplace become the property of his enemy Marie Antoinette, before he followed her to the scaffold. Under the Revolution it became State property, haunted, like many another deserted château, with memories of old France. To-day a new era in its history was opening. The little general, who moves about uneasily amid cheers from one party, and murmurs of "Cromwell" and "tyrant" from another, was soon to make it an emperor's palace, and, in less than ten years, the scene of his marriage to Marie Antoinette's niece.

This is not the place to describe the course of events on the 19th Brumaire. Nowhere is the story better told than in Albert Vandal's *Avènement de Bonaparte*.[a] The questions, which concern Bernadotte

[a] Vandal, i. chap. ix.

in connection with this day, are whether there was anything that he could have done, if he had been present, and if so, what he could have done, and when he could have done it.

The answers to these questions turn mainly on the personnel of the troops, who were on duty at St. Cloud; because, without the co-operation of some of the troops, he could have done nothing.

There were two classes of troops stationed in and about the palace. A formidable body of grenadiers formed the guard of the Directory and of the Councils. They were bound, alike by duty and by habit, to serve their masters, the Legislative Councils; and they were not to be relied upon by Bonaparte and his fellow-conspirators. There was, however, another force, composed of dragoons and of infantry of the line, upon whom Bonaparte could safely depend in the last resort, if the Councils, or either of them, should prove obdurate.[a]

The Councils showed themselves unwieldy instruments of revolution. The majority of the Ancients were in substantial accord with Bonaparte; but they were neither unanimous nor enthusiastic, and they had no settled plan of action. From force of habit they proceeded to occupy time in debating, and showed no signs of quickly coming to an agreement. The Council of 500, in true revolutionary fashion, made a dramatic protest against the anticipated *coup d'état*, by proceeding one by one to take a solemn oath of fidelity to the disappearing Constitution. Some deputies seemed to be expecting a deliverer. But the only possible deliverer was waiting for Fortune to come to him, instead of daring to go forth to meet her.[b]

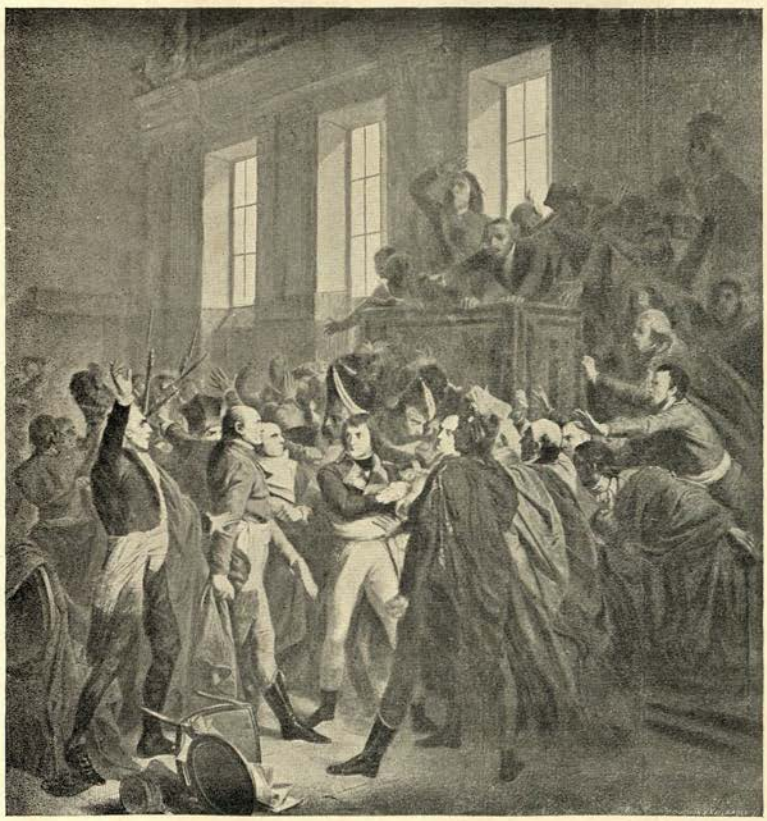
[a] Vandal, i. 277, 278. [b] *Ib.* i. 366.

Bonaparte, seeing that precious time was slipping away, became impatient, and visited both chambers, with the object of impelling them to commit their destinies to him. In both chambers his address was ineffective, and from the Council of 500 he escaped with difficulty, amid shouts of "*Hors la loi!*" Bonaparte might have perished, if these threats had been followed up by a decree of outlawry, the horror of which has been hit off by Anatole France in a fine sentence: "La mise hors la loi, la mort sans jugement! La seule idée en fait pâlir les plus déterminés."

It was at this point in the day's proceedings that the opportunity arose for the intervention of a military chief, capable of rallying the grenadiers of the guard of the Directory and of the Councils, in defence of the *corps législatif*, and of the Constitution. Three eye-witnesses have testified to the disposition, which these grenadiers displayed to defend their masters, even to the extent of attacking General Bonaparte himself. These three witnesses were Sieyès, Lavalette, and Thibaudeau.

Sieyès, looking out of a window, observed signs of hesitation among the grenadiers. It seemed to him that there was a movement to envelop and overpower Bonaparte.[a] He sent a message of warning to the general, who quickly betook himself to the dragoons and to the infantry of the line, who received him with acclamations; and the peril, if any, was past. The aide-de-camp, Lavalette, who was one of a crowd, watching the course of events from a flight of steps, declares that, if any leader had presented himself to the grenadiers, and had roused them to opposition with sufficient audacity, it was impossible to say how things might have turned out.[a] Thibaudeau, who saw Bona-

[a] Vandal, i. 380, 382.



THE AFTERNOON OF THE 19TH BRUMAIRE.
Bonaparte threatened with outlawry in the Council of 500.
St. Cloud, 19th Brumaire (Nov. 10th), 1799.
After the picture in the Louvre.

To face page 464.

parte escape from the Council of 500, and followed him to the courtyard, says that, if the Council had passed, instead of merely threatening, a decree of outlawry, Jourdan, Augereau, and Bernadotte might, if present, have been able to rally the grenadiers of the guard, whose duty it would have been to give effect to such a decree.[a]

The opportunity was let slip. The Council confined itself to menaces. Jourdan and Augereau remained passive and irresolute, while Bernadotte waited in Paris for an invitation which never came. During the tumult, which raged in the Council of 500, his name was used as a rallying cry; and shouts of "Bernadotte!" were heard above the uproar.[b] It is possible that, if he had been on the spot and in earnest, he might have spoilt the *coup*. But what is the use of such hypothetical speculation? He never could or would have taken such a part. His promise to Bonaparte to do nothing on his own initiative, without an order from some higher authority, was only the expression of his temperament. He lacked the political vigour, and he shrank from the military violence, without which a revolution, such as that of Brumaire, could neither be accomplished nor defeated.

The lost opportunity did not recur. But the proceedings might have terminated differently, if Lucien Bonaparte had not, in his capacity of president of the Council of 500, precipitated the *dénouement* by a daring *coup de théâtre*,[c] the success of which makes us wonder what might have been accomplished, if a popular general had played a resolute part. When matters seemed at their worst, Lucien sent an

[a] Thibaudeau, 6.
[b] Sorel, v. 482.
[c] Vandal, i. 384, 385.

urgent message for help to his brother, as a result of which he was rescued, in a highly dramatic manner, by military force from a supposed peril of death at the hands of some members of the assembly. He then mounted a horse, harangued the soldiers, and represented to them that the majority of the Council of 500 were in imminent danger of being assassinated by the daggers of a murderous minority, —an ingenious misrepresentation, which made it the duty of the guards of the Legislative Councils to defend the lives of their masters. Now was the time for the sword to intervene. The call thus given by Napoleon's brother was responded to by his brother-in-law General Leclerc, and his future brother-in-law General Murat, who, with a few soldiers, quickly cleared the Orangery of the deputies, driving them pell-mell into the gardens through doors and windows.[a]

After the Council of 500 had been forcibly broken up, much remained to be done; and it was Lucien Bonaparte who, "playing twenty parts in one day," accomplished the remainder. Having secured the co-operation of the Council of Ancients, he succeeded in collecting a reliable fragment of the Council of 500. With the help of this mutilated *corps législatif*, the necessary steps were taken for sanctioning a new Constitution, and nominating a provisional Consulate, consisting of Napoleon Bonaparte, Sieyès, and Roger Ducos, to form the new Executive.

Then came the preparation of concerted reports of speeches, of a public proclamation, and of tales about daggers and assassins, which were furbished up for the enlightenment of the public, and of the historian.[b] The curtain descended. The comedy was concluded.

[a] Vandal, i. 387–391. [b] Sorel, v. 486.

The *coup* had come off. "La farce est jouée," said Réal, one of the well-informed actors in the piece.[a]

Bonaparte drove back to Paris at 3 a.m. with Bourrienne. They went to Josephine's room, where the general gave her an account of the events of the day. During the conversation Bernadotte's name was mentioned. Bourrienne describes, in the following terms, what was said by Napoleon about him: "Have you seen him, Bourrienne?" said Bonaparte to me. "No, General." "Neither have I. . . . Would you imagine it, I had intelligence to-day of many intrigues, in which he is concerned. Would you believe it, he wished nothing less than to be appointed my colleague in authority? He talked of mounting his horse and marching with the troops, that might be placed under his command. He wished, he said, to maintain the Constitution; nay, more, I am assured that he had the audacity to add that, if it were necessary to outlaw me, the Government might come to him, and he would find soldiers capable of carrying the decree into execution." "All this, General, should give you an idea how inflexible his principles are." "Yes, I am well aware of it; there is something in that; he is honest. But for his obstinacy, my brothers would have brought him over. They are allied with him. As for me, have I not, I ask you, made sufficient advances to him? You have witnessed them. Moreau, who has a higher military reputation than he, came over to me at once. However, I feel sorry for having practised some cajolery on Bernadotte; and I am thinking of separating him from his coteries without anyone being able to find fault with the proceeding. I cannot revenge myself in any other manner. Joseph likes him. I should have

[a] Vandal, i. 387-391, 400-401.

everybody against me. These family considerations are follies! Good-night, Bourrienne. By the way, we shall sleep in the Luxembourg to-morrow."[a]

To the *coup d'état* of Brumaire Bernadotte had been a troublesome obstacle, nothing more. It might have been very different if he had continued to be Minister of War. He would have been armed with a Constitutional authority, the want of which restrained him from acting as a private citizen. Gohier, who was president of the Directory at the date of the *coup*, says in his memoirs :—

" If the administration which was formed after the 30th Prairial had not been mutilated ; if at the Ministry of Police . . . Bourguignon had not been replaced by . . . Fouché ; if Bernadotte had remained at the Ministry of War ; if Marbot had not ceased to command the 17th division ; assuredly the 18th Brumaire would not have taken place."[b]

When Sieyès, as already described,[c] succeeded in removing Bernadotte from the Ministry of War, he at the same time cleared away the only formidable barrier that lay in the path of Bonaparte's ambition.

[a] Bourr. iii. 106–108. [b] Gohier, i. 227. [c] Chapter LXVIII.

CHAPTER LXXV

THE FLIGHT OF THE BERNADOTTES AFTER BRUMAIRE —THE FOREST OF SENART

"Bernadotte disparaît avec sa femme déguisée en muscadin."—ALFRED RAMBAUD, *Revue Bleue*, January 1902.

"In the evening at my country house I found Bernadotte and a little youth . . . whom I found to be Madame Bernadotte in boy's clothes."—*General Sarrazin describing the evening of the 19th Brumaire.*

"When shall we have the pleasure of embracing our dear Oscar? The poor child loves us so much; he must pine at being so long without us."—*Madame Bernadotte to Bernadotte at General Sarrazin's country house, where they are hiding after the 19th Brumaire.*

THE invariable sequel to a revolutionary *coup d'état* or *journée*, as it was called, was the proscription of the most dangerous of the defeated party. On the night of the 19th Brumaire, seventy of the members of the Council of 500 were declared to be excluded from that body. This was a mild premonitory measure. On the same night the police were searching Paris for prominent Jacobins. Some were arrested; but the majority were careful not to be at home. A few days afterwards, an official list of the proscribed persons was published. Thirty-seven were condemned to deportation to Guiana; and twenty-two, including General Jourdan, to a penal island nearer home.[a] More merciful counsels prevailed when the storm of passions had calmed down. In the meantime, on the night of the 19th Brumaire, General Jourdan took refuge at the house of a friend. General Augereau made his peace before

[a] Vandal, i. 426.

it was too late. When he saw how the day had gone, he "came to heel." Towering like a giant over Bonaparte, he reminded him of Fructidor, by saying reproachfully, "What, General, do you make a *coup*, and forget to call to your aid your *little* Augereau?"[a]

But what of Bernadotte? His name was not upon the published list of proscripts; but he was well aware that Bonaparte, Sieyès, and the other victorious "Brumarians" knew of all his proceedings since the return from Egypt. There had been no concealment about his attitude. They knew of his offer to the Directory to arrest Bonaparte for deserting his army and for breaking the quarantine laws; of his invitation to Moreau to give him a call to arms against the usurper; of his advice to the deputies to appoint him commander of their guard of the Council of 500, so that he might counteract the ambitious Corsican. Many a man, after one of the "days" of the Revolutionary era, had gone to the scaffold or to a penal colony for far less than Bernadotte had said and done. He had a faithful and powerful friend in his brother-in-law Joseph Bonaparte. But Paris was seething with political passion, and the cauldron must have time to cool.

Of Bernadotte's doings on the evening of the 19th Brumaire we have the most direct evidence. General Sarrazin gives the following account of what met his eyes when he returned home after the events of St. Cloud:—

"My astonishment was excessive when, arriving in the evening at my country house, called Château Fraguier, near Villeneuve St. George, I found Bernadotte and a little youth, whom I did not recollect at first sight, and whom I found to be

[a] Barras, iv. 90; (transl.) iv. 116.

Madame Bernadotte in boy's clothes. The general told me that, after having thought for a long time upon the retreat he should choose, to give Bonaparte time to cool from the first fit of his rage, he had determined to come to me ; in the first place, because he was sure I would keep his secret; and, secondly, because, my château being contiguous to the forest of Senart, it was easy for his wife and him to conceal themselves there, with the certainty of not wanting the means of living. I thanked him for having given me the preference, and assured him that his confidence should be amply justified."[a]

The Bernadottes remained, for three days, in hiding at General Sarrazin's country house. Meanwhile, Joseph Bonaparte was exerting himself to bring about a reconciliation between Bernadotte and Napoleon. Desirée was corresponding with her sister, Madame Joseph, and was every day becoming more unhappy and home-sick. She was concerned about her son, and was continually saying to Bernadotte, "When shall we have the pleasure of embracing our dear Oscar? The poor child loves us so much; he must pine at being so long without us."

We leave Bernadotte, in his thirty-seventh year, in his hiding-place near the forest of Senart. How he got on his feet again is another day's story. The present volume is confined to the history of his life, before it came under the domination of Napoleon Bonaparte. After 9th November 1799, until he was elected Crown Prince of Sweden, in August 1810, Bernadotte was the servant of his successful rival.

Can anyone, who has followed all that occurred between Bernadotte and Bonaparte since their first meeting in March 1797, be surprised that the relations between master and servant, during the eleven years which followed 1799, were marked from time to

[a] Sarr. *Mém.* 134; *Phil.* ii. 205, 206.

time by suspicion on one side and by disaffection on the other? Can anyone be surprised to find Bernadotte losing much of the energy and the enthusiasm, which were mingled with gratitude to the Republic for having opened a career to his talents? When France became centred in Napoleon, the passion died out of Bernadotte's patriotism, and he ceased to be the sympathetic study for his countrymen that he was under the Republic.

It would be premature, at this stage, to attempt a final judgment on Bernadotte; and any estimate of the first phase of his career must be merely provisional and tentative. His capacity and energy have not been questioned. While in the King's army he never failed in his duty. When the Revolutionary deluge descended, it surprised no swimmer more capable of buffeting its waves. As a Republican soldier he commanded no large army in the field; but as a leader of from 7000 to 10,000 men, whether in the van or in covering a retreat, he was surpassed by few, if any, of the generals of that day. In the political arena he found himself, an uneducated novice, pitted against such trained gladiators as Barras, Talleyrand, Fouché, Sieyès, and the Bonapartes. They played upon his Gascon foibles, and fooled him more than once; but they never succeeded in drawing him into any of the unconstitutional acts of violence, in which, from time to time, they were so deeply involved. As ambassador and Minister he displayed public spirit and independence both in his manner of filling and of leaving offices, which he neither sought nor clung to. He was a fierce fighter in the field, and a "despot in his division"; but in the administration of conquered territory he showed himself sympathetic, clement, upright, and just.

When we turn from Bernadotte the soldier and the citizen to Bernadotte the man, we are met by a trait which acted as a counterpoise to his Gascon extravagances. From the day of his enlistment, this adventurous soldier of fortune was keenly sensible of the imperative force of restraining influences within him, which served, like "the charioteer" in the old myth of Plato's day, to rein and curb his fiery personality. The voices of "Honour," "Duty," and "Conscience" were always ringing in his ears. They did not always ring true. Sometimes they gave an uncertain sound. But they were loud enough and clear enough to keep in check upon many a critical occasion this impetuous Southerner, in whom the emotional element so largely predominated, and the mind worked through imagination rather than reflection.

He tamed the wild troops of the Revolution not so much by severity as by appealing to their better side, and to the impulsion of noble and manly instincts. "Do not courage and honour anticipate the law's decrees?" "With men of honour respect for misfortune is a sentiment before it is a duty."[a] Characteristic of Bernadotte was this firm belief in an inward arbiter, whose awards were so swift as to forestall and to outrun all external rules and obligations. It has been said of him that "il aimait s'empanacher d'un beau sentiment," and that he was the facile dupe of his own rhetoric. These were signs of weakness, but not of insincerity. Desaix, the Bayard of his military contemporaries, did not doubt that he was sincere, when, after describing him as "pleine de feu, de vigeur, de belles passions," he added, "de caractère surtout."[b]

[a] Pp. 391, 403, *supra*. [b] Desaix, *Journal de Voyage*, 70.

If Bernadotte is to be judged by the absolute and unbending standards, which a Rhadamanthine school of modern thought insists upon, he will suffer by comparison with generals or statesmen of more settled times, heirs of centuries of culture and education, whose careers trod comparatively beaten tracks. But, if his life and character be subjected to relative tests; if due allowance be made for race, for origin, for atmosphere; for the absence of any educational advantages or of any adventitious aid; for the magnitude of the events, the variety of the emergencies, the delicacy of the situations, the strength of the temptations, and the calibre of the men, which formed his environment; and then, if all that he did and all that he refrained from doing, be counted up, we shall better understand the verdict, which de Ségur[a] and Sorel[b] have agreed to, that, in spite of all his shortcomings, he "began nobly," and Pingaud's[c] saying that he was "the most daring, the most extraordinary, and the most fortunate of the cadets of Gascony."

He was not a hero without fault or blemish, as his apologists have painted him; nor a mixture of Iago and Catiline, as his enemies would like to represent him. He was a typical Béarnais,—brave, resourceful, impetuous in action, cautious in affairs. It is true that he was ambitious, jealous, egoistic; a better master than servant; a better ruler than subject. But if he had self-love, he also had "self-reverence" and "self-control," qualities which Tennyson ranks among the forces that "lead life to sovereign power." In the end, they led his life to sovereign power; and, at the beginning, in an age, when all the conventional restraints of manners, laws, and religion were relaxed, they enabled him to discipline himself as well as others.

[a] Ségur, i. 491. [b] Sorel, ii. 547. [c] Pingaud, 428.

L'ENVOI

THE writer hopes, if vouchsafed another vacant holiday, to follow Bernadotte through the later and more interesting stages of his career. How did he bear himself under the Consulate as Councillor of State and Commander in the West? What part, if any, did he take in the conspiracies of Arena, of Donnadieu, of the malcontent generals, of the placards of Rennes? What were his relations, under the Consulate, with Moreau? How did his friendship commence with Madame Récamier, and how did it progress with Madame de Staël? Under what circumstances did he rally to the Empire? Why did the Emperor give to his former rival a baton and a principality? How did he govern Hanover, Anspach, and the Hanseatic towns? What did he do or leave undone at Austerlitz, Schleitz, Auerstädt, Halle, Lubeck, Mohringen, Eylau, Spandau, Wagram, Walcheren? How did La Romana escape him? What was the significance of the Fouché-Bernadotte *rapprochement* in 1809? What share had Napoleon in his election as Crown Prince of Sweden? What was the explanation of that extraordinary event? Was he, in 1813 and 1814, a traitor to France, or only a loyal son of his adopted country? How did he drift into the alliance against Napoleon? What was his share in the victories of Grossbeeren, Dennewitz, and Leipsic? What were his relations with the Emperor Alexander, King Louis XVIII., Blücher, Bennigsen, Pozzo di Borgo, Lord Londonderry, the Count de Rocheouart? How did he win the Crown of Norway, and how far was

he from winning the Crown of France? What sort of a king did he make? What did the Bourbon ambassadors say about him? What did his subjects think of him? By what methods did he succeed, to the disappointment of his enemies, in holding his throne and transmitting it to his descendants? These and many other questions present themselves to a student of this strange career. If the writer cannot find time to pursue them, he trusts that they may be taken up by somebody more competent to do them justice.

APPENDICES

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(1) BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE ON BERNADOTTE'S EARLY LIFE [a]

AN English book on Bernadotte, Philippart's *Memoirs and Campaigns of Charles John, Prince Royal of Sweden*, was published in 1814, when the evidence was scanty, and had not been sifted. Very little help can be derived from it.

Two French biographies have appeared, one by Sarrans (1845) and the other by Touchard Lafosse (1858). Sarrans dismisses the period, which is covered by the present volume, in less than fifty pages. Touchard Lafosse was an apologist. He passes over the weak spots, and paints Bernadotte as an almost impossible hero. The narrative, so far as it goes, is not, as a general rule, inaccurate, and is cited occasionally by so careful a writer as Albert Vandal; but the picture is all light and no shade.

Four writers of distinction have, in the course of the last forty years, dealt with certain special aspects of Bernadotte's career. M. Frédéric Masson (1882), in *Les Diplomates de la Révolution* (pp. 149–248), and M. A. Dry (1906), in *Soldats Ambassadeurs sous le Directoire* (vol. ii. pp. 333–468), have described the Viennese Ambassadorship. This episode, which occupied nine weeks in 1798, is dealt with in Part VII. of the present volume, where the author's debt to MM. Masson and Dry is acknowledged in the footnotes. M. Christian Schefer (1899), in *Bernadotte Roi*, and M. Léonce Pingaud (1901), in *Bernadotte, Bonaparte, et les Bourbons*, have made studies of later periods of Bernadotte's life, which are not reached in the present volume. M. Pingaud devotes fifty introductory pages to the earlier stage of his career; and has also written a valuable monograph on the Comte d'Antraigues, which has been utilised by the present author in Chapter XXXIX.

Many excellent Swedish books have been written about Bernadotte, which are mainly occupied with his Swedish career. Wrangel, Blomberg, Almén, and Sjögren are among those who have also, by their investigations, thrown light upon his early life.

A German writer, Hans Kloeber, published a biography

[a] N.B.—This note refers only to the first phase of Bernadotte's life, covered by the present volume.

in 1911, which contains useful information, especially where Bernadotte's German campaigns and experiences are concerned.

Bernadotte and his Swedish ministers, from time to time, approached writers of histories and memoirs, and supplied them with information. For example, we know from Lockhart's *Life of Scott* (vol. ix. pp. 88, 89) that Sir Walter received, in this way, materials, which were embodied in the appendices to his life of Napoleon. His admirers declared that Bernadotte was defending himself against a campaign of calumny; his critics accused him of organising an *office de publicité* (see Pingaud, chap. xxiii. p. 376). In view of the suspicions, which this controversy has engendered, no use has been made of the writings of St. Donat and Roquefort, Chateauneuf, the brothers Montgaillard, or of those biographical dictionaries, which have been the object of criticism, upon the justice of which the present writer offers no opinion.

A cautious use has been made of the Memoirs of Bernadotte's contemporaries. Bourrienne's are no longer regarded as apocryphal, and can be checked by *Bourrienne et ses Erreurs*, some of the editors of which were as hostile, as Bourrienne himself was friendly, to Bernadotte (see Note (22)). Barras' *Memoirs* were, as Aulard has put it, " redigés par St. Albin " (Aulard's *Études et Leçons*, vi. 298). St. Albin was secretary at the Ministry of War, in 1799, under Bernadotte, and admired his chief. But he was not a partisan. On the contrary, he bitterly complains that Bernadotte, when he became king, neglected and forgot him (see Barras, iv. 19; Eng. trans., iv. 22, 23). Similarly, General Sarrazin, who served in several campaigns with Bernadotte between 1794 and 1804, and wrote some memoirs and military histories, admired Bernadotte while serving with him, but afterwards reproached him indignantly, when he was refused asylum in Sweden (see Note (18)). Some excuse may be offered for Bernadotte. He received in Sweden the families of several old colleagues and comrades—*e.g.* Ney, Fouché, and Drouet d'Erlon. If he had planted his realm with many more of his old friends, he might, perhaps, himself never have taken root.

For military events, use has been made of M. Arthur Chuquet's series of books on the Wars of the Revolution; of Jomini's History of those wars; of the historical compila-

tion known as *Victoires, Conquêtes, Désastres, Revers et Guerres civiles des Français*; of the military memoirs of General Jourdan, and of the Archduke Charles of Austria; of the correspondence of Napoleon, Jourdan, Kléber, Marceau, and other comrades of Bernadotte; and of the studies of particular campaigns, which have been published from time to time, including those written in recent years by Dupuis, Coutanceau, and Hennequin.

For public and political events, besides the standard English and French histories, the author has consulted the modern writings of MM. A. Aulard, Albert Sorel, Albert Vandal, and Louis Madelin; the works of Carlyle, Lord Acton, Lord Morley, and Mr. Rose; *L'Histoire Générale*, edited by Ernest Lavisse and Alfred Rambaud (vol. viii.); and the *Cambridge Modern History* (vol. viii.).

The letters, which were written by Bernadotte to his brother between 1786 and 1793, have been translated from the copies published by the Swedish writer Wrangel; and a selection has been made from letters, which have been collected, from time to time, by the author.

The book has been a holiday task. The writer has not had access to State papers or archives, but has used all the materials that he could find in the British Museum Library, the Library of the University of Dublin, and the National Library of Ireland. He desires to acknowledge gratefully the courtesy and help, which he has received from the guardians of those treasure-houses.

(2) COUNT PHILIPPE DE SÉGUR'S COMMENT ON BERNADOTTE'S EXTRAORDINARY SUCCESS

"Surely, of all the biographies of our contemporaries, the most curious, the most singular to study philosophically, would be that of the soldier who rose to the rank of Marshal, and remained a warrior of renown, although found wanting so often on the day of battle,—of that fierce and stubborn Republican, who became, by adoption, the continuer of a Royal Dynasty famous for heroic valour and for the antiquity of its aristocratic source, yet not sufficient to satisfy the incredible ambition of one, who indulged in other dreams. Surely never were what we call worldly success

and fortune more completely attained, but by such means, that never did success and fortune on this earth so clearly prove that of necessity there must exist another world."—*Mélanges*, par C^TE PHILIPPE DE SÉGUR, pp. 202, 203.

The writer of this passage, Count Philippe de Ségur, does not belong to the period covered by this volume. He was born in 1780 and joined the army in 1800. We quote him here and in Note (20), because he is a good type of Bernadotte's hostile critics. He was a gallant officer, but it was not easy for an ex-A.D.C. of Napoleon, who had fought with distinction for France in the War of Liberation, to be quite just to the ex-Marshal of the Empire, who fought in that war on the side of the Allies, and helped them to win the battle of Leipsic.

(3) LE TATOUAGE DE BERNADOTTE

A TRADITION that Bernadotte was tattooed on the arm with a revolutionary device and motto served to provide a plot for a comedy, or vaudeville, which was produced at the Palais Royal on 10th May 1833. The play appears to have been amusing and extravagant. A carpenter, to whom the honoured name of Thiébault was given on the play-bill, an ex-grenadier of the Royal-la-Marine Regiment, is represented as going to Sweden, in order to renew his acquaintance with his former comrade, King Bernadotte. They meet in one of the Royal parks, and agree to dine together, and, in honour of the occasion, to put on the uniform of their old regiment once again. The two veterans indulge in reminiscences, in the course of which the carpenter recalls the circumstance that he had once tattooed his comrade's arm with gunpowder. Carried away by old associations, the King pulls up his sleeve, and displays the indelible imprint of the Phrygian cap and of a revolutionary motto. The disclosure of this revolutionary *tatouage* places the King in such a dilemma, that he only escapes from the necessity for abdication by sanctioning the marriage of the hero and heroine of the piece, which is thus brought to a happy conclusion. The motto displayed by the King in the comedy was, according to one writer, *Liberté ou la Mort*. In another place it is stated to have been *Vive la République*.

The story, to which this comedy gave currency, is usually told in another form. For example, in *L'Intermédiaire des*

Chercheurs et Curieux (vol. xx. 100, 156, 157), reference is made to an article on "L'Histoire du tatouage" in the *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique*, where it is stated that, during a voyage round the world, an English prince, when the conversation turned upon tattooing, told the anecdote as follows. He said that it was noticed that the King of Sweden always objected, for some mysterious reason, to exposing his arm. When a serious illness made bleeding necessary, he exacted a promise of secrecy from his physician, who gave and broke the promise, after seeing the Phrygian cap and the words *Mort au Rois* tattooed on the King's arm. It would be interesting to inquire whether this anecdote can be traced to any source earlier than the Palais Royal comedy of 10th May 1833.

As regards the question whether the story is credible or not, a study of Bernadotte's early life suggests the following observations. If Bernadotte was ever tattooed with a revolutionary motto, it is improbable that it occurred while he was in the Royal-la-Marine Regiment. He left that regiment in April 1792, before the Republic had been established or its mottoes had come into vogue among soldiers like Bernadotte. The Monarchy was suspended in the following August, and abolished in September 1792. Then came the Republic, which became every day more popular with the army (Sorel, iii. 83). If *le tatouage de Bernadotte* ever happened, the incident best fits the temper of the time and of the man in the spring or summer of 1793, when he was serving as a subaltern officer, first under Custine and then under Beauharnais. The Republic was in the first year of its existence, and that stage of the war, which is known as "La Guerre aux Rois" was in full swing. It was a period of popular exaltation, when Republican mottoes were on every soldier's lips. It appears from Bernadotte's letter to his brother, dated 4th July 1793 (see Chapter XI. p. 64 *supra*), that the generals of the Republican Army, at that period, used to shout "*Hatred to Kings*" and "*Vive la République*" in the hearing of their subalterns. There is nothing inherently improbable in the story that a young lieutenant of that day was tattooed with a Republican device and motto. Such an incident might have occurred beside any camp-fire on the Rhine. But the story will remain an anecdote and nothing more, until some satisfactory evidence of its authenticity has been produced.

(4) EXTRACT FROM BERNADOTTE'S "ACTE DE NAISSANCE ET BAPTÊME"

THE following is a translation of the register of Bernadotte's birth (26th January 1763) and baptism (27th January 1763). A facsimile is given in Hilarion Barthéty's *La Maison natale de Bernadotte* :—

EXTRACT FROM THE ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS OF THE TOWN OF PAU (LOWER PYRENEES)

"In the year seventeen hundred and sixty-three, on the twenty-sixth January was born and on the twenty-seventh was baptized, John, legitimate son of the Sieur Henry de Bernadotte, *procureur* at the Court of the Sénéchal, and of the Demoiselle Jeanne St. Jean (his wife), inhabitants of this town, sponsors John Bernadotte, the younger, *procureur* at the Court of the Sénéchal, and Marie Besbedes,[a] his wife. Witnesses, Jean Borda, *procureur*, and Bernard Luc, crier of the said Court of the Sénéchal, who have signed with the godfather and with us, but not the godmother, as she cannot write (*pour ne savoir*).

"JEAN BERNADOTTE, *the younger.*
"LUC, BORDA, *Procureur.*
"POEYDAVANT, *Vicar of Pau.*"

(5) "LE GASCON FOU" ET "LE GASCON QUI RÉUSSIT"

THE "Gascon fool" is typified in the story of a Gascon dragoon at a review. His restive horse was endangering the safety of a peaceable crowd of onlookers, one of whom courteously requested him to retire a few paces. "Gentlemen," he said, drawing himself up pompously in his saddle, "my horse is from my country. He does not know how to retire." On the other hand, Gascon wit and dexterity are exemplified by a story of a young officer in the army of Marshal de Villars, who announced to some comrades, "I dine to-night with Villars." The Marshal overheard him, and said, "Sir, out of respect for my rank, you should speak of me as Monsieur de Villars." "Surely not, sir," replied the young Gascon; "we do not speak of Monsieur de César!" Bernadotte was a Gascon of the latter type.

[a] Name not clearly legible.

(6) THE HOUSE IN WHICH BERNADOTTE WAS BORN

AN old controversy with reference to the identity of the house at Pau, in which Bernadotte was born, has been settled in favour of the "Maison Balagué," which opens to two streets, and is now 6 Rue Tran and 5 Rue Bernadotte. When Bernadotte was five years of age, the family moved to the "Maison Dupouey," also in the Rue Tran, and in 1780, in the year of his enlistment, they moved to the "Maison Claverie" in the same street. It was in the latter house that Bernadotte spent his first furlough, which is referred to in Chapter III.—*La Maison de Bernadotte*, par HILARION BARTHÉTY (Pau, 1879).

(7) THE RELIGION OF THE BERNADOTTES

AFTER Bernadotte became Crown Prince of Sweden, and conformed to the religion of his adopted country, some writers, wishing to attribute to him more consistency than could be claimed for his compatriot, Henri IV., asserted that he came of Huguenot ancestry, while M. Henri Rochefort declared that he was a Jew, but offered no evidence except an alleged Jewish caste of countenance in Guérin's portrait (for which see p. 176 *supra*). A discussion upon the subject was started in the French *Notes and Queries* (*L'Intermédiaire des chercheurs et curieux*, for 1888–1893). A correspondent, le Comte F. V. Derangel, communicated the result of his researches among the records of baptisms and marriages in the Bernadotte family, from which it appears that his parents and ancestors were Catholics. This is consistent with a statement, which is made in several places, that his mother had Huguenot relatives. Bernadotte's wife, Desirée Clary, never changed her religion, and, while Crown Princess and Queen of Sweden, always remained a Catholic (*L'Intermédiaire des chercheurs et curieux*, vol. xxviii., November–December 1893, pp. 703–704, 765–768). The atmosphere of Bernadotte's home seems to have been noble and elevating. He is believed to have been educated at the Benedictine school at Pau, which had a high reputation. These home and school influences doubtless fostered the lofty strain which was an element of his character. During the period covered by this volume, he appears to have showed respect to religion and to religious institutions wherever he wielded power, *e.g.* at Maestricht, Adelsburg, Udine, and Mannheim.

(8) BERNADOTTE'S PEDIGREE

IN the note to Wrangel's Biographical Sketch (Stockholm, 1899), and in vol. xxviii. of *L'Intermédiaire des Chercheurs et Curieux*, pp. 765–768, information is collected about the pedigree of the Bernadotte family. It appears that Bernadotte's father (1711–1784) was the son of Jean Bernadotte and Marie Puchen, dite Sarton or de Sarthon (marriage-contract dated 1st May 1707), and the grandson of Jean de Bernadotte and Marie de Grangé (marriage-contract, 26th January 1671). It seems probable that the father of the last-named Jean de Bernadotte was Pierre de Pouey, son of Jouandot de Pouey, whose wife (marriage-contract, 5th July 1615) was daughter of Jean de Lajuins and of Estebène de Buleret, and was known as Germaine de Bernadotte from a house of that name which was her property. Pierre de Pouey succeeded to his mother's property and took the name of Bernadotte. The house appears, according to the Archives of Pau, to have belonged in 1546 to Armande de Bernadotte, and previously to one Bernadotte de Labarthe. Armande was believed to have been an ancestor of Germaine, and the name Armande was given to one of Bernadotte's brothers, who died young, and to several of his cousins. Bernadotte's mother, Jeanne de St. Jean, was the daughter of Jean St. Jean (*d.* 1762) and Marie Dabbadie (*d.* 1752), and the granddaughter of Bernard St. Jean (*d.* 1724); they belonged to the neighbouring parish or district of Boëil. It appears from the register of the marriage of Bernadotte's parents (Wrangel, 22, 23 n.) that she was the niece of a noble named Gédéon de Labastide, who was present at the ceremony and signed the register.

(9) A MEMENTO OF BERNADOTTE'S LEGAL APPRENTICESHIP

A MEMENTO of Bernadotte's legal apprenticeship is preserved in the Royal Library of Stockholm—namely, a copy of Bretonnier's *Les Questions de Droit*, inscribed on the title page "Ex Libris Johannis Bernadotte Palensis, minoris natu, 1780."

(10) BERNADOTTE'S MOTHER

BERNADOTTE'S mother died on 8th January 1809, when Bernadotte was one of Napoleon's marshals, and held the

rank of Prince of Ponte-Corvo. A copy of the register of Madame Bernadotte's death is given by Wrangel (pp. 27–28 n.). She is described in it as "mère de S.A.S. le Prince de Ponte-Corvo." The following reference to her death appeared in the *Journal des Basses-Pyrénées*, 10th January 1809:—

"Madame Bernadotte, mother of our illustrious compatriot, H.S.H. the Prince of Ponte-Corvo, died on the 8th of this month . . . leaving behind her the example of a simple and a virtuous life. The administrative and judicial authorities assisted at her obsequies, and availed themselves of the sad opportunity of once more testifying their esteem and attachment to a Prince, who will always be dear to the people of Béarn."—WRANGEL, pp. 28–29 n.

(11) BERNADOTTE'S CAPTAINS

THE following list of the superior officers of the Royal-la-Marine Regiment is extracted from the Army List (*L'État militaire de France*, pp. 229–230) for the year 1780:—

ROYAL-LA-MARINE, EN CORSE

Col. L. Comm. . .	M. LE COMTE DE LONS.
Col. L. en sec. . .	M. LE BARON DE BRUYERE SAINT MICHEL.
Lt.-Colonel . . .	M. DE TRESTONDAN.
Major	M. LE CHEV. DE ROCHEGUDE.
Qr. Me Tres. . .	M. PAQUET.

COMMANDANS—CAPITAINES EN SECOND

MM. DE LA BONEVILLE.	MM. DE MERIC, Grenadiers.
DE JUGEALS.	DUVERNET.
DE LA CASSINE, Grenadiers.	CH. DE BELCASTEL.
CH. DE BRASSAC.	DESRUAUX DE TARSAC.
DONNOUS, Chasseurs.	CH. DE COËTUS.
DE CHATEAUBODEAU.	DE BELLEFOREST, Chasseurs.
BARON DE CHALABRE.	DESCHAMPSNEUF.
DE JEAN.	DE MONTY.
SAINT-HILAIRE.	DE COATLEZ.
DE RAYMOND.	LANGEVIN.

It appears from Bernadotte's "États de Service" (see next Note), which have been published from the Archives of the Ministry of War, by Pingaud and by Hans Kloeber, that Bernadotte served from time to time in the companies of Captains de la Boneville, de Brassac, de Chalabre, Saint-

Hilaire, Duvernet, and Belcastel, all of whose names appear in the above list.

(12) BERNADOTTE'S RECORD OF MILITARY AND CIVIL EMPLOYMENTS DOWN TO 1799 (Pingaud, p. 429)

[From the Archives of the Ministry of War]

ÉTATS DE SERVICE DE BERNADOTTE

	REFERENCE TO PAGE OF THIS BOOK
Bernadotte (Jean de), fils de Henry de Bernadotte, procureur au sénéchal, et de demoiselle Jeanne de Saint-Jean (le parrain Jean Bernadotte cadet, aussi procureur au sénéchal, la marraine demoiselle Marie de Besbedes, son épouse).	
Né à Pau (et baptisé le même jour) le 26 janvier 1763	3
Mort à Stockholm le 8 mars 1844.	
Marié le 17 août 1798, à Sceaux-l'Unité, à Bernardine-Eugénie-Désirée Clary	342
Taille de 5 pieds 5 pouces 9 lignes.	
Soldat au régiment d'infanterie Royal-la-Marine (compagnie Brassac) 3 septembre 1780	11
Grenadier, 20 mai 1782	17
Caporal (compagnie Saint-Hilaire), 16 juin 1785	22
Sergent (compagnie de chasseurs), 31 août 1785	22
Fourrier (compagnie de Chalabre), 21 juin 1786	23
Sergent-major (compagnie de Belcastel), 11 mai 1788	23
Adjudant, 7 février 1790	25
Lieutenant au 36e régiment d'infanterie, 6 novembre 1791	39
Adjudant-major au 36e, 30 novembre 1792	55
Capitaine (par élection), 18 juillet 1793	66
Chef de bataillon (élu par 660 voix le 8 août 1793, confirmé le 8 février 1794)	68
Chef de brigade commandant la 71e demi-brigade d'infanterie de bataille, 4 avril 1794	74
Général de brigade (nommé à titre provisoire par les représentants du peuple à l'armée de Sambre-et-Meuse), 29 juin 1794	95
Général de division, 22 octobre 1794	110
Employé à l'armée d'Italie, 5 février 1797	182
En mission à Paris pour porter les drapeaux au Directoire, 9 août 1797	243
Ambassadeur de France à Vienne, février–14 avril 1798	293
Commandant la 5e division militaire à Strasbourg, 13 mai 1798	324
Nommé ambassadeur en Batavia, juin 1798 (refusé)	325
Employé à l'armée de Mayence, 20 octobre 1798	348
Général en chef de l'armée d'observation, 5 février 1799	359
Commandant l'aile gauche de l'armée du Danube (général en chef Jourdan), 28 mars–14 avril 1799	364
Ministre de la guerre, 2 juillet–14 septembre 1799	375

(13) BERNADOTTE'S GASCONADE ABOUT THE SIEGE OF CUDDALORE

In 1805 Bernadotte was Marshal of the Empire and Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Hanover, where, as usual, he succeeded in winning the gratitude and affection of the inhabitants. He does not appear to have been always overscrupulous in his method of doing so. A gasconade of his is related in different forms (*e.g.* by Sarrans, i. 55). It appears that some incident of the following kind occurred. At a levée an old German officer, General Von Gonheim, being aware that the Marshal had served in the ranks of the Royal-la-Marine Regiment, recalled the fact that in India at the siege of Cuddalore he had nursed in his tent a French prisoner, a young sergeant of the Royal-la-Marine Regiment, and expressed his disappointment at never having heard from him since. The Marshal without hesitation assumed the character of the young sergeant, apologised for his forgetfulness, and overwhelmed the old general with marks of gratitude and of favour. The incident created a favourable impression among the Germans, and the story of Marshal Bernadotte having been nursed by General Von Gonheim at Cuddalore was repeated everywhere, and passed into history. It is related as a true event in Wilks' *Sketches of Southern India*, in Lord Cornwallis' correspondence, in the *Quarterly Review* of October 1817, p. 62, and elsewhere. It has transpired, however, that when the Marshal retired after the levée, his staff officers remarked that they had heard for the first time that he had served in India. Bernadotte appears to have admitted that it was the first time that he himself had heard of it, and to have explained his gasconade by saying that he wished to rescue his old regiment from the imputation of ingratitude, and to discharge the obligation, which his fellow-sergeant of the Royal-la-Marine owed to Von Gonheim. This story reminds us of Sieyès' *mot* that Bernadotte *est du pays d'Henri IV. et un menteur comme le bon roi*. Several writers have said, in extenuation of such Gascon mendacities, that they were usually prompted by an impulsive good feeling, and that they were always quite unstudied.

(14) THE DAY OF THE TILES

THE following is a translation of the passage in Michelet's *History of France*, which represents Bernadotte as a principal actor in the riot of the Day of the Tiles. The writer was hostile to Bernadotte:—

"The troops were unable to regain the gates. They formed themselves in order of battle in the principal city square. Two companies of the Royal-la-Marine Regiment were in advance and became engaged with the people in a neighbouring street. It was two o'clock. The people, with the women in front, cast angry looks at the soldiers of the Royal Marine Regiment, who were as insolent and provocative as that royal regiment itself. Many of them were Basques or Bretons, and had a strange appearance. The one, who was in command, a non-commissioned adjutant, a Béarnais, with the hooked nose of a vulture,—bird of prey, bird of night,—with black eyes full of darkness and cunning, wounded at the first glance their rude instincts of loyalty. One of the women, unable to contain herself, crossed the road, and, in the presence of his men, administered to him a box in the ears. So says an eye-witness. The Béarnais was Bernadotte, afterwards King of Sweden. The blow was worth the sorceress's salute—'Thou shalt be King.' He saw the flash of his fortune, and gave the order to fire."

A large number of books and pamphlets are to be found in the Library of the British Museum dealing with La Journée des Tuiles. Very few of these books adopt Michelet's story. In the majority of them—including *Revue Historique* (Dufuyard), vol. xxxviii. p. 312; *Chroniques Dauphinoises* (Champollion-Figuer), and *Audience Solennelle de la Cour d'Appel de Grenoble* (Piollet), p. 25—the tradition that Bernadotte was prominently concerned in the events of La Journée des Tuiles is either not noticed or is discredited. M. Léonce Pingaud (p. 3) refers to it cautiously. A bibliography on the subject of the Day of the Tiles will be found in the *Audience Solennelle*, etc., mentioned above. See note (16) *infra*.

(15) POEM ATTRIBUTED TO BERNADOTTE

THE Governor of Grenoble was the Marquis de Marcieu. A poem, addressed to him on the occasion of a dinner which he gave to the Royal-la-Marine Regiment, has been attributed

to Bernadotte. As the tradition is unsupported by evidence, and the poem is not in the least characteristic of him, it has not been thought worth printing.

(16) AN ENTRY IN THE ARCHIVES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE LOWER PYRENEES

An entry has been discovered in the departmental archives of the department of the Lower Pyrenees. It appears in the registered list of the correspondence addressed to the Intendant of Pau, M. de Bucheparn, under the date 1787–1789. The entry is as follows: "La veuve Bernadotte de Pau presente une requête pour faire enfermer son fils." It has been assumed that this entry refers to Madame Henri Bernadotte; but there is nothing to indicate to which of her sons the entry refers. It has been suggested to the present writer that it may be an inaccurate memorandum of a letter relating to the imprisonment of Bernadotte after the Day of the Tiles at Grenoble in June 1788. If the word were "élargir" instead of "enfermer," this would seem a plausible suggestion, having regard to the date. The point seems to be worthy of further investigation. See note (14) *supra.*

(17) BERNADOTTE "DIEU DES ARMÉES"

THE following eye-witness's description of Bernadotte in 1794 is given in *Le Château de Pau,* par Basele de Lagréze, p. 296: "The place to see him was in the midst of his troops. His features were finely outlined, and expressed a sublime animation. Sparks of fire seemed to flash from his eyes. His black hair was uncovered, and floated in the breeze. To see him towering head and shoulders above his soldiers, you would say that the God of armies had come down on earth, and had entered the lists in order to inspire the courage of the combatants."

(18) GENERAL SARRAZIN

GENERAL SARRAZIN, after his first meeting with Bernadotte in May 1794, served with him in Germany in 1795 and 1796; in Italy in 1797. In 1798 Sarrazin took part in Humbert's expedition to Ireland, fought at Castlebar, and was taken prisoner at Ballinamuck. He again served with Bernadotte on the Rhine, and at the War Office in 1799, and in the west

of France under the Consulate; but not after 1804. In 1810 Sarrazin, while holding a command at Boulogne, deserted, and escaped to London. This occurred about two months before Bernadotte's election as Crown Prince of Sweden; but there was no connection between the two events. Sarrazin, disappointed at his reception in England, sailed for Sweden, expecting a welcome from the Crown Prince, but was not allowed to land in that country. He wrote memoirs and histories of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. In his references to Bernadotte there is an obvious struggle between the personal liking, which he had entertained for his former chief while serving under him, and his bitter resentment at his deportation from Sweden. After the Restoration he returned to France, where he was arrested on charges of desertion and of bigamy; and was in prison at the time of the return from Elba of Napoleon, who said at St. Helena that, if he had not forgotten his existence, he would have had Sarrazin shot during the hundred days. After the second Restoration he was tried and convicted, and became a disgraced and ruined man. Bernadotte in later years took pity on him, and made him an allowance. His judgment was by no means sound, and he sometimes formed estimates and entertained suspicions in reference to his contemporaries, which history has not confirmed. For example, he suspected Bonaparte of having conspired to get Pichegru out of his way by banishment, and Hoche by poison (*Histoire des guerres civiles*, p. 404). He suspected that he was himself sent away to Paris in May 1796 (see Chapter XXIV. *supra*) in order to enable some treacherous compact with the Austrians to be carried out in his absence (*Histoire des guerres civiles*, p. 524; *Histoire des guerres de 24 ans*, p. 483). In several places he suggests that Bernadotte's opposition to Bonaparte's *coup d'état* of Brumaire was arranged between them in order to delude the Jacobins. He wrote about events, in which he took part, and about persons, with whom he mixed; but he wrote many years after the events which he described; and his evidence has to be scanned with caution, especially where he purports to quote the precise words used in conversations at which he was present, and also where he steps aside from his narrative and attempts to draw inferences, impute motives, or give rein to his suspicions.

(19) THE CHRISTENING OF THE "ARMY OF SAMBRE AND MEUSE"

THE christening of the Army of Sambre and Meuse came about in the following way. Barrére announced the victory of Fleurus to the National Convention on 29th June 1794, and added: "See the happy result of the combination of the three armies of Moselle, Ardennes, and the North. Is not that combination, which is to be known in future as the Army of Sambre and Meuse, a match for the coalition of Pilnitz, and for the conspiracy of all the brigands of Europe?" He then presented a report from the Committee of Public Safety; upon reading which the National Convention passed the following decree: "The National Convention, having heard the report of the Committee of Public Safety, makes the following decree: The Armies of the North, of the Ardennes, and of the Moselle, which are now united, shall be known in future as the Army of Sambre and Meuse. They continue to deserve the gratitude of their country."—See *Moniteur*, 30th June 1794.

(20) COUNT PHILIPPE DE SÉGUR ON BERNADOTTE'S ALLEGED JEALOUSY OF DISPOSITION

THE following passage from the Memoirs of Count Philippe de Ségur represents that writer's opinion about the egoistic side of Bernadotte's character. The charge is exaggerated, but not wholly untrue. It relates to an incident (his absence from the battle of Auerstadt in 1806) which does not come within the scope of this volume. "It was not fear of responsibility or any other kind of fear that influenced him. His friends say that he would have been a hero in his own cause. But he was by nature altogether self-centred. It was only when he could attribute everything to himself, that his heart opened, and that he displayed ardour, generosity, devotion to those about him, every attractive quality, and all the enthusiasm of lofty souls. But to endure an equal or a superior—such an effort was for him always impossible or unendurable."—*Histoire et Mémoires*, par LE GÉNÉRAL C^TE DE SÉGUR, vol. iii. p. 36.

(21) TRANSLATION OF AN EXTRACT FROM L'ACTE DE MARIAGE DE BERNADOTTE

To-day, the 30th Thermidor, in the sixth year of the French Republic,[a] at seven o'clock in the evening, there appeared before me Étienne Bouvet, municipal agent of the commune of Sceaux l'Unité, . . . Jean Baptiste Bernadotte, aged 35 years, Divisional General of the armies of the Republic, now residing in this commune . . . and Bernardine Eugénie Désirée Clary, aged 18 years,[b] youngest daughter of the late François Clary, merchant of Marseilles, and of Françoise Rose Clary . . . now residing at Genoa. The said bride and bridegroom were accompanied by Auguste Morin,[c] aged 26 years, captain in the 10th Regiment of Chasseurs of Cavalry; François Desgranges, Notary Public; Joseph Bonaparte, aged 30 years, member of the Council of 500, who was furnished with full power to act for Françoise Rose Sonis; Justicienne Victor Sonis, aged 50 years, landed proprietor; Lucien Bonaparte, aged 26 years, member of the Council of 500, residing with his brother Joseph at Paris, in the Rue du Roche.

(22) BERNADOTTE AND THIÉBAULT

ALBERT VANDAL, in the passage quoted at p. 438 (Chapter LXX. *supra*), says of Bernadotte: "His popularity remained a real one; his striking appearance, his eloquence, his cordial manners, something grand and sumptuous in his greeting, gave him influence and hold over men." In the following passage, General Thiébault, who had met Bernadotte at Udine in 1797 (see Chapter XL. pp. 235, 236 *supra*), gives an account of a visit which he paid to Bernadotte at the Ministry of War. In the meantime, Thiébault had risen from the rank of Captain to that of Adjutant-General.

"One of my first visits was to the Ministry of War, that is to say, to General Bernadotte. I was curious to know whether, in the eminent position to which he had attained, I should find him as kindly as he had showed himself at Leoben and Udine; and also whether I should find in him anything that

[a] August 17, 1798.

[b] Desirée Clary is said by several writers to have been born on November 8, 1777. If so, she was in her twenty-first year at her marriage.

[c] Probably *Maurin*, Bernadotte's A.D.C., acting as his best man.

would remind me of our last interview, when, in speaking to me of the situation of France, he gave way to emotion and even to tears. As soon as he perceived who I was, he came forward and embraced me, and said, 'My dear Thiébault, as you find me Minister of War, please ask some favour of me.' 'I only come,' I said, 'to thank you for your past kindnesses, to which you now wish to add; and I come with all the greater alacrity, because there is no favour that I wish to ask of you.' 'But, my dear fellow,' he said, 'every officer has some favour to ask of the Minister of War.' 'There are,' I replied, 'some occasions, upon which it would be indiscreet to ask for anything, and that is my present position. How can I ask for anything, when I have risen in two years from the rank of Captain to that of Adjutant-General?' 'Very well,' he said, 'since you will not ask me for anything, I hope that at all events you will allow me to ask the pleasure of your company at dinner.'"—*Mémoires de Thiébault*, vol. iii. p. 29.

(23) THE MEMOIRS OF BOURRIENNE AND THE 18TH BRUMAIRE

THE Memoirs of Bourrienne are to be received with caution, but are no longer regarded as apocryphal. They contain several references to Bernadotte's proceedings before and during the revolution of Brumaire. The only serious question of fact, as regards which the accuracy of these references is challenged in *Bourrienne et ses erreurs*, is the account of the conversation between Bonaparte and Bernadotte at the Rue Chantereine on the morning of the 18th Brumaire. It is suggested in *Bourrienne et ses erreurs* that Bernadotte did not go beyond the courtyard of Bonaparte's house, and had no conversation with him; and authority is lent to this denial by the circumstance that Joseph Bonaparte, who brought Bernadotte to the Rue Chantereine, was one of the compilers of *Les Erreurs*. But Joseph was not everywhere, and did not see everything on that morning, and, even if he was responsible for this denial, there seems to be a decided balance of probability in favour of the substantial accuracy of Bourrienne's narrative of a scene, of which he claimed to have been a witness. There is Bernadotte's own account embodied in the *Note Historique sur le 18e Brumaire*, which has been adopted by his French, German, and Swedish

biographers—Lafosse, Sarrans, Hans Kloeber, Blomberg, and others. The general effect of the conversation is alluded to by several well-informed contemporaries such as Barras, Gohier (whose wife breakfasted at the Rue Chantereine on the morning in question), and Thibaudeau. The fact of such an interview having taken place is accepted by some of the most careful students of the period, *e.g.* Sorel, Vandal, and Pingaud. It fits in with the admitted facts both antecedent and subsequent. It is possible that Bourrienne or his editors made use of the *Note Historique sur le* 18ᵉ *Brumaire*; but, even if it was used to refresh his recollection or to supplement their information, the fact remains that the story of the interview, as related by Bourrienne, receives weighty confirmation from other sources, and has been adopted by trustworthy historians.

(24) A SELECTION FROM LETTERS COLLECTED BY THE AUTHOR

A. September 17, 1794 . .	To General Kléber.
B. June 17, 1796. . .	,, General Jourdan.
C. September 27, 1797 . .	,, Barras.
D. February 24, 1798 . .	,, Barras.
E. February 13, 1799 . .	,, General Scherer, Minister of War.
F. March 1, 1799 . .	,, General Ney.
G. March 18, 1799 . .	,, Chiappe.
H. July to September 1799 .	Letters and Circulars from the Ministry of War.

Of these letters, two (A and G) are holographs. The others are signed. D is written on the official paper of the French Embassy at Vienna. The letters referred to at H are all written on the official paper of the French Ministry of War.

A

Letter from General Bernadotte to General Kléber

[See Chapter XVIII. p. 102]

" EGALITÉ. LIBERTÉ.

" Bilsen le 1ᵉʳ des Sansculottides [a]
a 9 heures du soir.

" Je rentre a l'instant, mon cher général, J'ay cru devoir rester plus tard que tu ne l'avais ordonné parce que l'ennemy

[a] September 17, 1794.

au moment ou j'allais me retirer a fait un mouvement sur moy. J'ay rassemblé ma cavalerie, et je l'ay chargé a mon tour et obligé de fuir. La journée a été heureuse ; quoy que la colonne de Bounamir n'ait pu faire ce que tu projettais je n'en ay pas moins rempli ton objet. Le village de Welvesert celuy de Lonaken avec les redoutes qui les deffendaient ont été emportées avec la rapidité de l'eclair. La cavalerie a fait les preuves de valeur elle s'est vu prise en flanc par sa gauche, elle a tenu ferme et l'ennemy a été deconcerté deux fois. J'ay chassé l'ennemy de Welvesert, et je luy ay massacré impitoyablement une compagnie de chasseurs de [word illegible] qui s'était obstinée d'y rester. Le 1er Bataillon de la 71e ½ Brigade s'est chargé de ce soin et n'a pas voulu faire de prisonniers—les chevaux legers de Carakien ont perdu beaucoup de Monde Jay eu a luter contre une colonne considerable qui étoit sortie de Mastrict. Demain Je te fairai un rapport plus circonstancié Jay perdu quelques hommes entre autres l'adjutant major de la 71e. Je suis bien content de l'artillerie quoi qué enveloppeé par l'ennemy elle ne s'est pas deconcertée.—Salut estime et amitié, J. B. BERNADOTTE.

"L'infanterie a resisté aujourd hui a la charge de la cavalerie."

(Remainder of postscript only partly legible.)

The letter is addressed—"Au General Kléber, Commandant l'aile gauche à [place illegible].—BERNADOTTE."[a]

B

LETTER FROM GENERAL BERNADOTTE TO GENERAL JOURDAN

[See Chapter XXV. p. 137]

"DU CAMP DE ROTTENAU
le 29 Prairial.[b]

"JE suis en position sud des hauteurs de V. Toute la Division y est rassemblée. . . .

[a] This letter, which is all in Bernadotte's handwriting, appears to have been written hurriedly, and is full of curious spelling and punctuation. A letter from the same place from Bernadotte to Jourdan, dated two days later (19th September), is mentioned in the catalogue of the Morrison collection of autograph letters, but the contents are not given in the catalogue, and the present writer has not seen it. It would be interesting to compare its contents with this letter.

[b] June 17, 1796.

" Je vous prie mon Général de m'envoyer les ordres le plus tot qu'il vous sera possible car je vous avoue franchement que je crains de laisser une partie de l'infanterie légère. Elle est si epparpillé qu'il faut que je mette tous les officiers de mon état-major en course pour les retrouver.

" L'adjoint Maison qui commandait un corps des flanqueurs et qui devait rester à Nassau jusqu'à cinq heures me rends compte que l'ennemi a établi un pont à Nassau. . . . Salut et respect,

" LE GÉNÉRAL DE DIVISION,
" J. B. BERNADOTTE."

Address on back page—

" Au Général-en-chef Jourdan
à Montabaur.
" BERNADOTTE."

C

LETTER FROM GENERAL BERNADOTTE TO BARRAS

[See Chapter XLV. pp. 265, 266]

" PARIS, le 2ème jour complémentaire
5ème année de la République Française.[a]

" Au CITOYEN BARRAS, Membre du
Directoire Exécutif.

" LE GÉNÉRAL DE DIVISION, BERNADOTTE.

" CITOYEN DIRECTEUR,—Vous m'avez engagé à réfléchir sur le commandement que Le Directoire désire me confier, je me suis de nouveau interrogé et j'ai éxaminé l'ensemble des devoirs que j'allais m'imposer avec les moyens qu'il fallait pour les remplir. Quelque pénible que soit pour moy l'obligation de convenir de mon insuffisance à soutenir un tel poids, je vous dois cet aveu, car je deviendrai fortement coupable si j'avais l'ambition assez téméraire pour ôser accepter un emploi qui demande des connaissances profondes, l'étude parfaite du ceur humain, un caractére conciliant et ferme tout à la fois. Mon honneur, le cri de ma conscience, ma zèle que je désire rendre utile a ma patrie m'ordonnent de refuser.

[a] September 27, 1797.

Ne persistez pas à faire d'un bon soldat un mauvais chef, recevez, je vous prie, les regrets qui accompagment ce refus et veuillez le faire connâitre au Directoire auprés duquel j'aurai l'honneur de me rendre pour lui témoigner ma gratitude.—Salut et respect, J. B. BERNADOTTE.

" P.S.—S'il fallait abattre une faction, je ne consulterais que mon courage et mon ardent républicanisme, mais dans un moment ou les crises sout passées, je dois au gouvernement le résultat du calcul de mes moyens."

D

LETTER FROM GENERAL BERNADOTTE TO BARRAS

[See Chapter XLIX. pp. 298, 299]

" VIENNE, le 6 Ventôse an 6ème
de la République Française.[a]

" LIBERTÉ. EGALITÉ.

" L'AMBASSADEUR DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE,
Près la Cour de Vienne,

" Au CITOYEN BARRAS.

" CITOYEN DIRECTEUR,—En demandant au Directoire Exécutif l'agrement de conserver prés de moi, en activité de service, mais sans titre diplomatique, mes deux aides de camp et le citoyen Gerard Capitaine à la 30ème ½ brigade de l'infanterie, je ne vous dissimule pas que j'ai eu l'espoir, pour ne pas dire la certitude, que vos bontés pour moi vous feraient appuyer ma demande auprès du gouvernment—les officiers servent avec moi depuis trés longtemps, ils se sont dans des [situations][b] difficiles developées d'une manière tellement evidente en faveur de la République que je regarde comme utile leur séjour à Vienne. Je ne vous parlerai pas de l'amitié qui me lie a eux, et je me bornerai à vous observer que je regarderai comme un désagrement pour moi leur eloignement de l'ambassade.—Salut et respect,

" J. B. BERNADOTTE."

[a] February 24, 1798. [b] Word written " uations."

E

Letter from General Bernadotte to General Schérer, Minister of War

[See Chapter LVII. p. 358]

"Paris, le 25 Pluviôse an 7
de la République Française.[a]

"Le Général Bernadotte,
"Au Citoyen Schérer, Ministre de la Guerre.

"Je vous envoie, Citoyen Ministre, copie des notes que j'ai remis hier au Directeur Rewbel et au Président du Directoire. Je vous prie de prendre ses ordres sur les observations que je fais. Si une migraine violente ne me retenait pas chez moi, J'aurais eû l'honneur de vous voir ce matin, mais j'espère le pouvoir, dans l'après midi.

"Je tiens beaucoup, citoyen Ministre, à ne pas avoir de commissaire civil en Italie; je hais les tracassaries, et ces sortes de gens éblouis par leur puissance en suscitent presque toujours aux militaires.

"Si je joignais l'armée d'Observation, je n'aurais pas la même repugnance; parceque étant prés de vous et du gouvernment, je pourrais être éclairé par tous les deux.

"Je respecte trop tout ce qui porte au caractère civil pour ne permettre jamais envers ces sortes d'agents le moindre abus de pouvoir; mais dans la crainte d'y être forcé par leurs prétentions, je crois qu'il est nécessaire, ou qu'il n'y en ait pas du tout, ou qu'il soient dans un état de nullité telle qu'ils ne puissent pas donner la plus légere inquiétude aux hommes qui aiment le gouvernment et la république. Le temps ou ces sortes d'agents n'acceptaient des missions que pour venir désorganiser les armées, m'est trop présent pour que je désire le voir renouveller.—Aimitié et respect,

"J. B. Bernadotte."

[a] February 13, 1799.

F

Letter from General Bernadotte to General Ney

[See Chapter LVIII. pp. 363, 366.]

"Quartier Général de Landau,
le 11 Ventôse an 7 de la Repᵉ.ᵃ

"Armée d'Observation

"Bernadotte, Général-en-chef
de l'armée d'Observation,
"Au Général Ney.

"Je viens mon cher Ney de recevoir à l'instant votre lettre, je vous remercie de tous les details que vous me donnez; ils m'ont paru ynterresants.

"Au reçu de celle ci et sans perdre un seul ynstant vous vous emparerez de tous les bateaux qui se trouvent à Mannheim. Vous vous établirez dans la ville de la maniére la plus convenable aux faibles moyens que vous avez et en même temps la plus militaire. Je suis parfaitement tranquille sur vos dispositions, je ne vous en trace même. Vous avez reconnu la localité et consequemment vous étés à cet égard beaucoup plus instruit que moi.

"Vous aurez soin de declarer aux Magistrats de Mannheim que vous entrez pas dans leur ville comme ennemi; que vous regardez la paix comme termineé avec l'Empire et que c'est pour assurer son independance que l'armée française veut mettre accidentellement garnison dans Mannheim.

"Vous ne manquerez pas d'assurer les habitants qu'aucune contribution ne leur sera imposée (Ceci cependant ne doit être dit que verbalement) et vous leur direz de même que la moindre obstination de leur part serait punie par l'incendie de la ville et que ceux qui auraient provoqué cette vengeance le [illegible] encore d'une maniere terrible et exemplaire.

"J'attache mon cher Ney, la plus haute importance à ce que nous nous établissons a Mannheim parce que je regarde comme excessivement difficile, pour ne pas dire impossible, d'entrer dans Philipsburg par surprise. Il y a deux jours, qu'il y a eu une fausse alerte, elle a été occasionée par . . . des gardes qui étaient sur la rive du Rhin qui ont annoncés que les Français se portaient vers la Place. L'alarme a été formée, l'épouvante à la verité à frappé tous les esprits. . . . Le commandant a donné des ordres tres precis et tres severes

pour recommander la plus active surveillance. Aujourd'hui les villages sur le bord du Rhin sont gardés et il n'a pas d'espoir de les surprendre . . . avant de parvenir jusque à la place.

" Il vous arrivera ce soir à Oggersheim une pièce de 12, une de 8 et un obusier escorté par 60 hommes d'infanterie.[b] Je fais partir à l'instant de Landau 600 hommes. . . . Ils arriveront demain dans la matinée à Oggersheim.

" Independanment de l'ordre qui a été envoyé au Général Laborde le 6 au soir, j'ai expediè avant hier un courier au général Freytag avec injunction de faire partir de suite et diriger à marche forcée sur Frankenthal le 8ème Regt de Dragons,[b] je pense qu'en même temps que vous recevez ma lettre vous aurez des nouvelles de ce Regt Il est vraisemblable encore que les deux regts de grosse Cavalerie arriveront dans la Journée de demain.

" Le Gl. Sorbier va se rendre à Frankental ;[b] il donnera les ordres necessaires pour faire construire le pont ; ne negligez pas neanmoins de faire rassembler promptemment tous les Bateliers et tous les ouvriers necessaires pour y travailler.—Je vous embrasse, J. B. BERNADOTTE."

[a] March 1, 1799.

[b] See *Ney*, par Bonnal, p. 131, where it is stated that the 8th regiment of Dragoons and three pieces of ordnance reached their destination on 1st March, as promised in this letter. The answer to this letter is given by Bonnal on p. 132, in which Ney writes: " Je suis charmé que Sorbier arrive."

G

[See Chapter LVIII. p. 364]

" JE prie l'amy Chiappe de remettre à Bonnel douze cent livres que je lui remettrai. Je pars à l'instant pour la campagne.—Je l'embrasse, J. B. BERNADOTTE.

" PARIS, le 28 Ventôse an 7[a]
la somme en a été rendue.
" CHIAPPE."[b]

Address—" Pour le CITOYEN CHIAPPE à Paris."

[a] March 18, 1799.

[b] Chiappe, to whom this letter is addressed, is referred to in Chapter LXVI. p. 408. He was a friend not only of Bernadotte but also of Madame Bernadotte. This letter is a holograph. In another handwriting are the words, " La somme en a été rendue," signed " Chiappe." There is an endorsement stating that the letter was given as an autograph by Charles Jean Roi de Suède to a cousin, whose name is illegible.

H

Some of Bernadotte's Letters and Circulars when Minister of War

[See Part IX. Chapters LX. to LXIX.]

The following thirteen documents, in the author's possession, bear the official headings and devices of the Ministry of War. Four of them (Nos. 1, 2, 4, and 13) are official printed copies of circulars issued by the Minister with the printed signature, "Salut et Fraternité, J. Bernadotte." Three of them (Nos. 8, 10, and 11) are letters signed by Bernadotte, which bear his signature, and, on the back sheet, the address and the official frank and postmarks, showing that they had passed through the post. Nos. 3, 5, 6, and 7 are ordinary official letters signed by the Minister. Nine is a verified copy. Twelve is in the nature of an official File signed by Bernadotte and endorsed by *Les Commissaires de la Trésorerie Nationale*, and by *Le Contrôleur des Dépenses*. These documents have not been thought worth printing *in extenso*; but the list, with the subject-matter, will give the reader a glimpse of the Minister's official correspondence.

1. *July* 11 (23 *Messidor*).—Official Print of a Circular (issued from Bureau des Invalides) dealing with complaints from pensioners about arrears of pay, and referring complainants for payment to the Treasury.
2. *July* 12 (24 *Messidor*).—Official Print of a Circular (issued from Bureau de l'Inspection) addressed to the Commander-in-Chief of the armies of the Republic referring to an amnesty which had been accorded to deserters and recruits who had failed to join the Colours, and giving directions on the subject.
3. *July* 22 (4 *Thermidor*).—Letter (written from Bureau des Hopitaux) retaining a doctor (name illegible) in his functions at the island of Rhé and extending his sick-leave for four weeks, with a P.S. in Bernadotte's handwriting giving a further extension for three weeks.
4. *July* 24 (6 *Thermidor*).—Official Print of a Circular to the Central and Municipal administration and to the Military Commissaries (issued from Bureau de l'Inspection) upon the same subject as No. 2 *supra*,

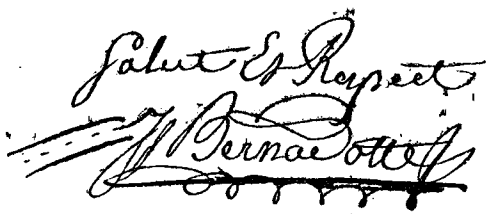
with a special direction to observe and report if any *émigrés* should try to avail themselves of the amnesty, which had been accorded to deserters and recruits who had failed to join the Colours.

5. *July* 26 (8 *Thermidor*).—Letter to Citizen Jacques Maurin appointing him Controller-General of Military Establishments and Services in the Army of the Alps—(Jacques Maurin was probably a relative of Bernadotte's A.D.C. Maurin).
6. *August* 1 (14 *Thermidor*).—Letter addressed to General Dalbignac appointing him to the command of the 10th Military Division with head-quarters at Perpignan.
7. *August* 1 (14 *Thermidor*).—Letter addressed to the Inspector-General of Cavalry in the Army of Danube, at Colmar, with reference to the establishment of cavalry depôts.
8. *August* 22 (5 *Fructidor*).—Letter (written from Bureau de la Comptabilité Générale) addressed to the General commanding the 8th Division at Marseilles, sending him 3000 francs, secret service money, to be applied in discovering *émigrés*, and in counteracting Royalist plots.
9. *September* 3 (17 *Fructidor*).—Official verified copy of a letter (written from Bureau du Personnel l'Infanterie) addressed to Lt.-Col. Souppe, detailing him for service in the Army of the Danube under General Masséna.
10. *September* 5 (19 *Fructidor*).—Letter (written from Bureau des Vivres) addressed to the General commanding the 8th Division at Marseilles, approving of the steps which he had taken for the relief of the Army of Italy by sending grain to Genoa. The following passage expresses Bernadotte's concern about the reverses which had been recently sustained in Italy. "Je ressens la grandeur de la perte que la République a faite; elle exige de puissantes ressources, et ma constante sollicitude attache sans cesse mes regards sur l'Italie, pour atténuer nos revers et les réparer."
11. *September* 9 (23 *Fructidor*).—Letter (written from Bureau de la Conscription) addressed to the

Municipal Commissary of the 11th Arrondissement, authorising the acceptance of a substitute for Citizen Oudin who, on account of his infirmities, is excused from military service.

12. *September* 9 (23 *Fructidor*).—Order, headed Dépenses Extraordinaires, for 100,000 francs on account of the organisation and equipment of the Conscripts, presented by Bernadotte on 23 Fructidor, and endorsed by the Commissaries of the Treasury, Defermon, Dubois, and another (name illegible), on 25 Fructidor, also by the Financial Controller-General.

13. *September* 15 (29 *Fructidor*).—Official Print of a Circular upon the subject of the amnesty which had been accorded to deserters and recruits who had not joined the Colours. Special direction as to the case of *émigrés* who may avail themselves of the amnesty. This must have been one of the last official acts of the Minister, for he received on this day the letter dated 28 Fructidor which ended his career as Minister.



SIGNATURE OF BERNADOTTE TO LETTER D.

SOME HEADINGS FROM BERNADOTTE'S LETTERS.

Vienne le 6 Ventose An 6 ème de la République Française

218

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Le Ministre de la Guerre,

To face page 504.

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